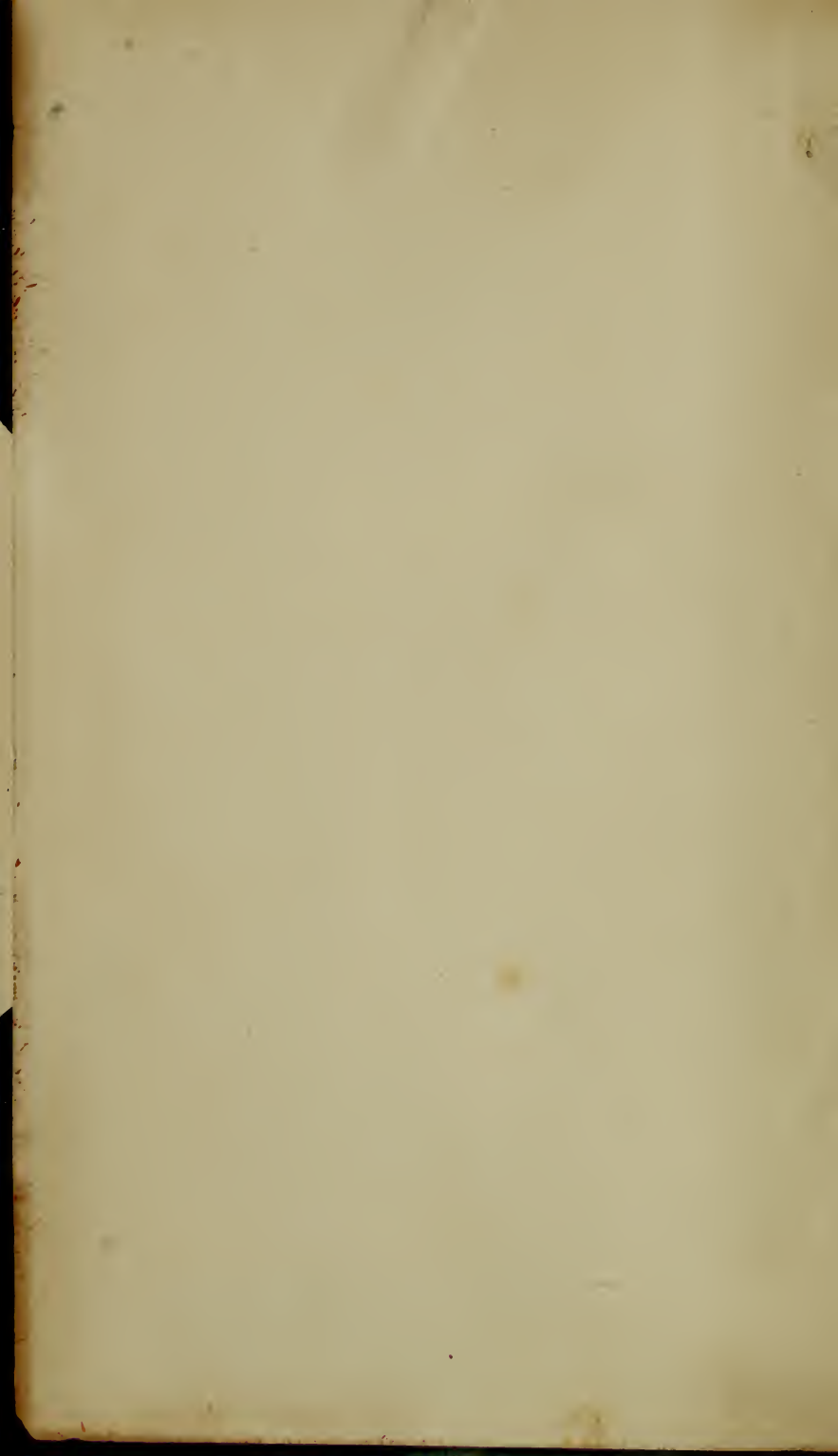




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ST RONAN'S WELL

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BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

A merry place, 'tis said, in days of yore ;
But something ails it now—the place is cursed.
WORDSWORTH.

EDINBURGH:

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, NORTH BRIDGE.

MDCCCLX.

HAROLD BRIGHAM
BRIGHAM UNIVERSITY
PROVO, UTAH

INTRODUCTION TO ST RONAN'S WELL.

THE novel which follows is upon a plan different from any other that the author has ever written, although it is perhaps the most legitimate which relates to this kind of light literature.

It is intended, in a word—*celebrare domestica facta*—to give an imitation of the shifting manners of our own time, and paint scenes, the originals of which are daily passing round us, so that a minute's observation may compare the copies with the originals. It must be confessed that this style of composition was adopted by the author rather from the tempting circumstance of its offering some novelty in his compositions, and avoiding worn-out characters and positions, than from the hope of rivalling the many formidable competitors who have already won deserved honours in this department. The ladies, in particular, gifted by nature with keen powers of observation and light satire, have been so distinguished by these works of talent that, reckoning from the authoress of *Evelina* to her of *Marriage*, a catalogue might be made, including the brilliant and talented names of Edgeworth, Austin, Charlotte Smith, and others, whose success seems to have appropriated this province of the novel as exclusively their own. It was therefore with a sense of temerity that the author intruded upon a species of composition which had been of late practised with such distinguished success. This consciousness was lost, however, under the necessity of seeking for novelty, without which, it was much to be apprehended, such repeated incursions on his part would nauseate the long-indulgent public at the last.

The scene chosen for the author's little drama of modern life was a mineral spring, such as are to be found in both divisions of Britain, and which are supplied with the usual materials for redeeming health, or driving away care. The invalid often finds relief from his complaints, less from the healing virtues of the Spaw itself, than because his system of ordinary life undergoes an entire change, in his being removed from his ledger and account-books—from his legal folios and progresses of title-deeds—from his counters and shelves—from whatever else forms the main source of his constant anxiety at home, destroys his appetite, mars the custom of his exercise, deranges the digestive powers, and clogs up the springs of life. Thither, too, comes the saunterer, anxious to get rid of that wearisome attendant *himself*; and thither come both males and females, who, upon a different principle, desire to make themselves double.

The society of such places is regulated, by their very nature, upon a scheme much more indulgent than that which rules the world of fashion, and the narrow circles of rank in the metropolis. The titles of rank, birth,

and fortune, are received at a watering-place, without any very strict investigation, as adequate to the purpose for which they are preferred ; and as the situation infers a certain degree of intimacy and sociability for the time, so, to whatever heights it may have been carried, it is not understood to imply any duration beyond the length of the season. No intimacy can be supposed more close for the time, and more transitory in its endurance, than that which is attached to a watering-place acquaintance. The novelist, therefore, who fixes upon such a scene for his tale, endeavours to display a species of society, where the strongest contrast of humorous characters and manners may be brought to bear on and illustrate each other with less violation of probability, than could be supposed to attend the same miscellaneous assemblage in any other situation.

In such scenes, too, are frequently mingled characters, not merely ridiculous, but dangerous and hateful. The unprincipled gamester, the heartless fortune-hunter, all those who eke out their means of subsistence by pandering to the vices and follies of the rich and gay—who drive, by their various arts, foibles into crimes, and imprudence into acts of ruinous madness, are to be found where their victims naturally resort, with the same certainty that eagles are gathered together at the place of slaughter. By this the author takes a great advantage for the management of his story, particularly in its darker and more melancholy passages. The impostor, the gambler, all who live loose upon the skirts of society, or, like vermin, thrive by its corruptions, are to be found at such retreats, when they easily, and, as a matter of course, mingle with these dupes, who might otherwise have escaped their snares. But, besides those characters who are actually dangerous to society, a well-frequented watering-place generally exhibits for the amusement of the company, and the perplexity and amazement of the more inexperienced, a sprinkling of persons called by the newspapers eccentric characters—individuals, namely, who, either from some real derangement of their understanding, or, much more frequently, from an excess of vanity, are ambitious of distinguishing themselves by some striking peculiarity in dress or address, conversation or manners, and perhaps in all. These affectations are usually adopted, like Drawcansir's extravagances, to show *they dare*, and, I must needs say, those who profess them are more frequently to be found among the English, than among the natives of either of the other two divisions of the united kingdoms. The reason probably is, that the consciousness of wealth, and a sturdy feeling of independence, which generally pervade the English nation, are, in a few individuals, perverted into absurdity, or at least peculiarity. The witty Irishman, on the contrary, adapts his general behaviour to that of the best society, or that which he thinks such ; nor is it any part of the shrewd Scot's national character unnecessarily to draw upon himself public attention. These rules, however, are not without their exceptions ; for we find men of every country playing the eccentric at these independent resorts of the gay and the wealthy, where every one enjoys the license of doing what is good in his own eyes.

It scarce needed these obvious remarks to justify a novelist's choice of a watering-place as the scene of a fictitious narrative. Unquestionably it affords every variety of character, mixed together in a manner which cannot, without a breach of probability, be supposed to exist elsewhere ; neither can it be denied that, in the concourse which such miscellaneous collections of persons afford, events extremely different from those of the quiet routine of ordinary life may, and often do, take place.

It is not, however, sufficient that a mine be in itself rich and easily accessible ; it is necessary that the engineer who explores it should himself, in mining phrase, have an accurate knowledge of the *country*, and possess the

skill necessary to work it to advantage. In this respect the author of St Ronan's Well could not be termed fortunate. His habits of life had not led him much, of late years at least, into its general or bustling scenes, nor had he mingled often in the society which enables the observer to "shoot folly as it flies." The consequence perhaps was, that the characters wanted that force and precision which can only be given by a writer who is familiarly acquainted with his subject. The author, however, had the satisfaction to chronicle his testimony against the practice of gambling, a vice which the devil has contrived to render all his own, since it is deprived of whatever pleads an apology for other vices, and is founded entirely on the cold-blooded calculation of the most exclusive selfishness. The character of the traveller, meddling, self-important, and what the ladies call fussing, but yet generous and benevolent in his purposes, was partly taken from nature. The story, being entirely modern, cannot require much explanation, after what has been here given, either in the shape of notes, or a more prolix introduction.

It may be remarked, that the English critics, in many instances, though none of great influence, pursued St Ronan's Well with hue and cry, many of the fraternity giving it as their opinion that the author had exhausted himself, or, as the technical phrase expresses it, written himself out; and as an unusual tract of success too often provokes many persons to mark and exaggerate a slip when it does occur, the author was publicly accused, in prose and verse, of having committed a literary suicide in this unhappy attempt. The voices, therefore, were, for a time, against St Ronan's on the Southern side of the Tweed.

In the author's country it was otherwise. Many of the characters were recognised as genuine Scottish portraits, and the good fortune which had hitherto attended the productions of the Author of Waverley did not desert, notwithstanding the ominous vaticinations of its censurers, this new attempt, although out of his ordinary style.

ABBOTSFORD, 1st February 1832.



ST RONAN'S WELL.

CHAPTER I.

AN OLD-WORLD LANDLADY.

But to make up my tale,
She breweth good ale,
And thereof maketh sale.

SKELTON.

ALTHOUGH few, if any, of the countries of Europe have increased so rapidly in wealth and cultivation as Scotland during the last half-century, Sultan Mahmoud's owls might nevertheless have found in Caledonia, at any term within that flourishing period, their dowry of ruined villages. Accident or local advantages have, in many instances, transferred the inhabitants of ancient hamlets from the situations which their predecessors chose, with more respect to security than convenience, to those in which their increasing industry and commerce could more easily expand itself; and hence places which stand distinguished in Scottish history, and which figure in David M'Pherson's excellent historical map, can now only be discerned from the wild moor by the verdure which clothes their site, or, at best, by a few scattered ruins, resembling pinfolds, which mark the spot of their former existence.

The little village of St Ronan's, though it had not yet fallen into the state of entire oblivion we have described, was, about twenty years since, fast verging towards it. The situation had something in it so romantic that it provoked the pencil of every passing tourist; and we will endeavour, therefore, to describe it in language which can scarcely be less intelligible than some of their sketches, avoiding, however, for reasons which seem to us of weight, to give any more exact indication of the site, than that it is on the southern side of the Forth, and not above thirty miles distant from the English frontier.

A river of considerable magnitude pours its streams through a narrow vale, varying in breadth from two miles to a fourth of that distance, and which, being composed of rich alluvial soil, is, and has long been, enclosed, tolerably well inhabited, and cultivated with all the skill of Scottish agriculture. Either side of this valley is bounded by a chain of hills, which, on the right in particular, may be almost termed mountains. Little brooks arising in these ridges

and finding their way to the river, offer each its own little vale to the industry of the cultivator. Some of them bear fine large trees, which have as yet escaped the axe, and upon the sides of most there are scattered patches and fringes of natural copsewood, above and around which the banks of the stream arise, somewhat desolate in the colder months, but in summer glowing with dark-purple heath, or with the golden lustre of the broom and gorse. This is a sort of scenery peculiar to those countries which abound, like Scotland, in hills and in streams, and where the traveller is ever and anon discovering in some intricate and unexpected recess a simple and sylvan beauty, which pleases him the more, that it seems to be peculiarly his own property as the first discoverer.

In one of these recesses, and so near its opening as to command the prospect of the river, the broader valley, and the opposite chain of hills, stood, and, unless neglect and desertion have completed their work, still stands, the ancient and decayed village of St Ronan's. The site was singularly picturesque, as the straggling street of the village ran up a very steep hill, on the side of which were clustered, as it were, upon little terraces, the cottages which composed the place, seeming, as in the Swiss towns on the Alps, to rise above each other towards the ruins of an old castle, which continued to occupy the crest of the eminence, and the strength of which had doubtless led the neighbourhood to assemble under its walls for protection. It must, indeed, have been a place of formidable defence; for, on the side opposite to the town, its walls rose straight up from the verge of a tremendous and rocky precipice, whose base was washed by St Roman's burn, as the brook was entitled. On the southern side, where the declivity was less precipitous, the ground had been carefully levelled into successive terraces, which ascended to the summit of the hill, and were, or rather had been, connected by staircases of stone, rudely ornamented. In peaceful periods these terraces had been occupied by the gardens of the Castle, and in times of siege they added to its security, for each commanded the one immediately below it, so that they could be separately and successively defended, and all were exposed to the fire from the place itself—a massive square tower of the largest size, surrounded, as usual, by lower buildings, and a high embattled wall. On the northern side arose a considerable mountain, of which the descent that lay between the eminence on which the Castle was situated seemed a detached portion, and which had been improved and deepened by three successive huge trenches. Another very deep trench was drawn in front of the main entrance from the east, where the principal gateway formed the termination of the street, which, as we have noticed, ascended from the village, and this last defence completed the fortifications of the tower.

In the ancient gardens of the Castle, and upon all sides of it excepting the western, which was precipitous, large old trees had found root, mantling the rock and the ancient and ruinous walls with their dusky verdure, and increasing the effect of the shattered pile which towered up from the centre.

Seated on the threshold of this ancient pile, where the “proud

porter" had in former days "rear'd himself,"¹ a stranger had a complete and commanding view of the decayed village, the houses of which, to a fanciful imagination, might seem as if they had been suddenly arrested in hurrying down the precipitous hill, and fixed as if by magic in the whimsical arrangement which they now presented. It was like a sudden pause in one of Amphion's country-dances, when the huts which were to form the future Thebes were jigging it to his lute. But, with such an observer, the melancholy excited by the desolate appearance of the village soon overcame all the lighter frolics of the imagination. Originally constructed on the humble plan used in the building of Scotch cottages about a century ago, the greater part of them had been long deserted; and their fallen roofs, blackened gables, and ruinous walls, showed Desolation's triumph over Poverty. On some huts the rafters, varnished with soot, were still standing, in whole or in part, like skeletons, and a few, wholly or partially covered with thatch, seemed still inhabited, though scarce habitable; for the smoke of the peat-fires, which prepared the humble meal of the indwellers, stole upwards, not only from the chimneys, its regular vent, but from various other crevices in the roofs. Nature, in the meanwhile, always changing, but renewing as she changes, was supplying, by the power of vegetation, the fallen and decaying marks of human labour. Small pollards, which had been formerly planted around the little gardens, had now waxed into huge and high forest-trees; the fruit-trees had extended their branches over the verges of the little yards, and the hedges had shot up into huge and irregular bushes; while quantities of dock and nettles and hemlock, hiding the ruined walls, were busily converting the whole scene of desolation into a picturesque forest bank.

Two houses in St Ronan's were still in something like decent repair; places essential—the one to the spiritual weal of the inhabitants, the other to the accommodation of travellers. These were the clergyman's manse and the village inn. Of the former we need only say that it formed no exception to the general rule by which the landed proprietors of Scotland seem to proceed in lodging their clergy, not only in the cheapest, but in the ugliest and most inconvenient house which the genius of masonry can contrive. It had the usual number of chimneys—two, namely—rising like asses' ears at either end, which answered the purpose for which they were designed as ill as usual. It had all the ordinary leaks and inlets to the fury of the elements, which usually form the subject of the complaints of a Scottish incumbent to his brethren of the presbytery; and, to complete the picture, the clergyman being a bachelor, the pigs had unmolested admission to the garden and courtyard, broken windows were repaired with brown paper, and the disordered and squalid appearance of a low farmhouse, occupied by a bankrupt tenant, dishonoured the dwelling of one who, besides his clerical character, was a scholar and a gentleman, though a little of a humorist.

Beside the manse stood the kirk of St Ronan's, a little old mansion with a clay floor, and an assemblage of wretched pews, originally of

¹ See the old ballad of King Estmere, in *PERCY'S Reliques*.

carved oak, but heedfully clouted with white fir-deal. But the external form of the church was elegant in the outline, having been built in Catholic times, when we cannot deny to the forms of ecclesiastical architecture that grace, which, as good Protestants, we refuse to their doctrine. The fabric hardly raised its grey and vaulted roof among the crumbling hills of mortality by which it was surrounded, and was indeed so small in size, and so much lowered in height by the graves on the outside, which ascended half-way up the low Saxon windows, that it might itself have appeared only a funeral vault, or mausoleum of larger size. Its little square tower, with the ancient belfry, alone distinguished it from such a monument. But when the grey-headed beadle turned the keys with his shaking hand, the antiquary was admitted into an ancient building, which, from the style of its architecture, and some monuments of the Mowbrays of St Ronan's, which the old man was accustomed to point out, was generally conjectured to be as early as the thirteenth century.

These Mowbrays of St Ronan's seem to have been at one time a very powerful family. They were allied to, and friends of, the house of Douglas, at the time when the overgrown power of that heroic race made the Stewarts tremble on the Scottish throne. It followed that, when, as our old *naïf* historian expresses it, "no one dared to strive with a Douglas, nor yet with a Douglas's man, for if he did, he was sure to come by the waur," the family of St Ronan's shared their prosperity, and became lords of almost the whole of the rich valley of which their mansion commanded the prospect. But upon the turning of the tide, in the reign of James II., they became despoiled of the greater part of those fair acquisitions, and succeeding events reduced their importance still farther. Nevertheless, they were, in the middle of the seventeenth century, still a family of considerable note; and Sir Reginald Mowbray, after the unhappy battle of Dunbar, distinguished himself by the obstinate defence of the Castle against the arms of Cromwell, who, incensed at the opposition which he had unexpectedly encountered in an obscure corner, caused the fortress to be dismantled, and blown up with gunpowder.

After this catastrophe the old Castle was abandoned to ruin; but Sir Reginald, when, like Allan Ramsay's Sir William Worthy, he returned after the Revolution, built himself a house in the fashion of that later age, which he prudently suited in size to the diminished fortunes of his family. It was situated about the middle of the village, whose vicinity was not in those days judged any inconvenience, upon a spot of ground more level than was presented by the rest of the acclivity, where, as we said before, the houses were notched, as it were, into the side of the steep bank, with little more level ground about them than the spot occupied by their site. But the Laird's house had a court in front and a small garden behind, connected with another garden, which, occupying three terraces, descended, in emulation of the orchards of the old Castle, almost to the banks of the stream.

The family continued to inhabit this new messuage until about fifty years before the commencement of our history, when it was much damaged by a casual fire; and the Laird of the day, having

just succeeded to a more pleasant and commodious dwelling at the distance of about three miles from the village, determined to abandon the habitation of his ancestors. As he cut down at the same time an ancient rookery (perhaps to defray the expenses of the migration), it became a common remark among the country folk, that the decay of St Ronan's began when Laird Lawrence and the crows flew off.

The deserted mansion, however, was not consigned to owls and birds of the desert; on the contrary, for many years it witnessed more fun and festivity than when it had been the sombre abode of a grave Scottish Baron of "auld lang syne." In short, it was converted into an inn, and marked by a huge sign, representing on the one side St Ronan catching hold of the devil's game-leg with his Episcopal crook, as the story may be read in his veracious legend, and on the other the Mowbray arms. It was by far the best-frequented public-house in that vicinity; and a thousand stories were told of the revels which had been held within its walls, and the gambols achieved under the influence of its liquors. All this, however, had long since passed away, according to the lines in my frontispiece.

"A merry place, 'twas said, in days of yore;
But something ail'd it now—the place was cursed."

The worthy couple (servants and favourites of the Mowbray family) who first kept the inn, had died reasonably wealthy, after long carrying on a flourishing trade, leaving behind them an only daughter. They had acquired by degrees not only the property of the inn itself, of which they were originally tenants, but of some remarkably good meadow-land by the side of the brook, which, when touched by a little pecuniary necessity, the Lairds of St Ronan's had disposed of piecemeal, as the readiest way to portion off a daughter, procure a commission for the younger son, and the like emergencies. So that Meg Dods, when she succeeded to her parents, was a considerable heiress, and, as such, had the honour of refusing three topping farmers, two bonnet-lairds, and a horse-couper, who successively made proposals to her.

Many bets were laid on the horse-couper's success, but the knowing ones were taken in. Determined to ride the fore-horse herself, Meg would admit no helpmate who might soon assert the rights of a master; and so, in single blessedness, and with the despotism of Queen Bess herself, she ruled all matters with a high hand, not only over her men-servants and maid-servants, but over the stranger within her gates, who, if he ventured to oppose Meg's sovereign will and pleasure, or desired to have either fare or accommodation different from that which she chose to provide for him, was instantly ejected with that answer which Erasmus tells us silenced all complaints in the German inns of his time, *Quære aliud hospitium*; ¹ or, as Meg expressed it, "Troop aff wi' ye to another public." As this amounted to a banishment in extent equal to sixteen miles from Meg's residence, the unhappy party on whom it was passed had no

¹ In a colloquy of Erasmus, called *Diversaria*, there is a very unsavoury description of a German inn of the period, where an objection of the guest is answered in the manner expressed in the text—a great sign of want of competition on the road.

other refuge save by deprecating the wrath of his landlady, and resigning himself to her will. It is but justice to Meg Dods to state, that though hers was a severe and almost despotic government, it could not be termed a tyranny, since it was exercised, upon the whole for the good of the subject.

The vaults of the old Laird's cellar had not, even in his own day, been replenished with more excellent wines; the only difficulty was to prevail on Meg to look for the precise liquor you chose;—to which it may be added, that she often became restiff when she thought a company had had “as much as did them good,” and refused to furnish any more supplies. Then her kitchen was her pride and glory; she looked to the dressing of every dish herself, and there were some with which she suffered no one to interfere. Such were the cock-a-leeky, and the savoury minced collops, which rivalled in their way even the veal cutlets of our old friend Mrs Hall, at Ferrybridge. Meg's table-linen, bed-linen, and so forth, were always home-made, of the best quality, and in the best order; and a weary day was that to the chambermaid in which her lynx eye discovered any neglect of the strict cleanliness which she constantly enforced. Indeed, considering Meg's country and calling, we were never able to account for her extreme and scrupulous nicety, unless by supposing that it afforded her the most apt and frequent pretext for scolding her maids; an exercise in which she displayed so much eloquence and energy that we must needs believe it to have been a favourite one.¹

We have only farther to commemorate the moderation of Meg's reckonings, which, when they closed the banquet, often relieved the apprehensions, instead of saddening the heart, of the rising guest. A shilling for breakfast, three shillings for dinner, including a pint of old port, eighteenpence for a snug supper—such were the charges of the inn at St Ronan's under this landlady of the olden world, even after the nineteenth century had commenced; and they were ever tendered with the pious recollection, that her good father never charged half so much, but these weary times rendered it impossible for her to make the lawing less.²

Notwithstanding all these excellent and rare properties, the inn at St Ronan's shared the decay of the village to which it belonged.

¹ This circumstance shows of itself that the Meg Dods of the tale cannot be identified with her namesake Jenny Dods, who kept the inn at Howgate, on the Peebles road; for Jenny, far different from our heroine, was unmatched as a slattern.

² This was universally the case in Scotland forty or fifty years ago; and so little was charged for a domestic's living when the author became first acquainted with the road, that a shilling or eighteenpence was sufficient board wages for a man-servant, when a crown would not now answer the purpose. It is true, the cause of these reasonable charges rested upon a principle equally unjust to the landlord and inconvenient to the guest. The landlord did not expect to make anything upon the charge for eating which his bill contained, in consideration of which the guest was expected to drink more wine than might be convenient or agreeable to him, “*for the good*,” as it was called, “*of the house*.” The landlord, indeed, was willing and ready to assist, in this duty, every stranger who came within his gates. Other things were in proportion. A charge for lodging, fire, and candle, was long a thing unheard of in Scotland. A shilling to the housemaid settled all such considerations. I see, from memorandums of 1790, that a young man, with two ponies and a serving-lad, might travel from the house of one Meg Dods to another, through most part of Scotland, for about five or six shillings a-day.

This was owing to various circumstances. The high-road had been turned aside from the place, the steepness of the street being murder (so the postilions declared) to their post-horses. It was thought that Meg's stern refusal to treat them with liquor, or to connive at their exchanging for porter and whisky the corn which should feed their cattle, had no small influence on the opinion of those respectable gentlemen, and that a little cutting and levelling would have made the ascent easy enough; but let that pass. This alteration of the highway was an injury which Meg did not easily forgive to the country gentlemen, most of whom she had recollected when children. "Their fathers," she said, "wad not have done the like of it to a lone woman." Then the decay of the village itself, which had formerly contained a set of feuars and bonnet-lairds, who, under the name of the Chirupping Club, contrived to drink two-penny, qualified with brandy or whisky, at least twice or thrice a-week, was some small loss.

The temper and manners of the landlady scared away all customers of that numerous class who will not allow originality to be an excuse for the breach of decorum, and who, little accustomed, perhaps, to attendance at home, love to play the great man at an inn, and to have a certain number of bows, deferential speeches, and apologies, in answer to the G—d—n ye's which they bestow on the house, attendance, and entertainment. Unto those who commenced this sort of barter in the Clachan of St Ronan's, well could Meg Dods pay it back, in their own coin; and glad they were to escape from the house with eyes not quite scratched out, and ears not more deafened than if they had been within hearing of a pitched battle.

Nature had formed honest Meg for such encounters; and as her noble soul delighted in them, so her outward properties were in what Tony Lumpkin calls a concatenation accordingly. She had hair of a brindled colour, betwixt black and grey, which was apt to escape in elf-locks from under her mutch when she was thrown into violent agitation—long skinny hands, terminated by stout talons—grey eyes, thin lips, a robust person, a broad, though flat chest, capital wind, and a voice that could match a choir of fish-women. She was accustomed to say of herself in her more gentle moods, that her bark was worse than her bite; but what teeth could have matched a tongue, which, when in full career, is vouched to have been heard from the Kirk to the Castle of St Ronan's?

These notable gifts, however, had no charms for the travellers of these light and giddy-paced times, and Meg's inn became less and less frequented. What carried the evil to the uttermost was, that a fanciful lady of rank in the neighbourhood chanced to recover of some imaginary complaint by the use of a mineral well about a mile and a half from the village; a fashionable doctor was found to write an analysis of the healing waters, with a list of sundry cures; a speculative builder took land in feu, and erected lodging-houses, shops, and even streets. At length a tontine subscription was obtained to erect an inn, which, for the more grace, was called a hôtel, and so the desertion of Meg Dods became general.¹

¹ See Note A. *Building-Feus in Scotland.*

She had still, however, her friends and wellwishers, many of whom thought, that as she was a lone woman, and known to be well to pass in the world, she would act wisely to retire from public life, and take down a sign which had no longer fascination for guests. But Meg's spirit scorned submission, direct or implied. "Her father's door," she said, "should be open to the road, till her father's bairn should be streekit and carried out at it with her feet foremost. It was not for the profit—there was little profit at it;—profit?—there was a dead loss;—but she wad not be dung by any of them. They maun hae a hottle,¹ maun they?—and an honest public canna serve them! They may hottle that likes; but they shall see that Lucky Dods can hottle on as lang as the best of them—ay, though they had made a Tamteen of it, and linkit a' their breaths of lives, whilk are in their nostrils, on end of ilk other like a string of wild-geese, and the langest liver bruick a' (whilk was sinful presumption), she would match ilk ane of them as lang as her ain wind held out." Fortunate it was for Meg, since she had formed this doughty resolution, that although her inn had decayed in custom, her land had risen in value in a degree which more than compensated the balance on the wrong side of her books, and, joined to her usual providence and economy, enabled her to act up to her lofty purpose.

She prosecuted her trade too with every attention to its diminished income; shut up the windows of one-half of her house to baffle the tax-gatherer; retrenched her furniture; discharged her pair of post-horses, and pensioned off the old hump-backed postilion who drove them, retaining his services, however, as an assistant to a still more aged hostler. To console herself for restrictions by which her pride was secretly wounded, she agreed with the celebrated Dick Tinto to repaint her father's sign, which had become rather undecipherable; and Dick accordingly gilded the Bishop's crook and augmented the horrors of the Devil's aspect, until it became a terror to all the younger fry of the school-house, and a sort of visible illustration of the terrors of the arch-enemy, with which the minister endeavoured to impress their infant minds.

Under this renewed symbol of her profession, Meg Dods, or Meg Dorts, as she was popularly termed on account of her refractory humours, was still patronised by some steady customers. Such were the members of the Killnakelty Hunt, once famous on the turf and in the field, but now a set of venerable grey-headed sportsmen, who had sunk from fox-hounds to basket-beagles and coursing, and who made an easy canter on their quiet nags a gentle induction to a dinner at Meg's. "A set of honest decent men they were," Meg said; "had their sang and their joke—and what for no? Their bind was just a Scots pint over-head, and a tappit-hen to the bill, and no man ever saw them the waur o't. It was thae cockle-brained callants of the present day that would be mair owerta'en with a puir quart than douce folks were with a magnum."

Then there was a set of ancient brethren of the angle from Edin-

¹ This Gallic word (*hôtel*) was first introduced in Scotland during the author's childhood, and was so pronounced by the lower class.

burgh, who visited Saint Ronan's frequently in the spring and summer, a class of guests peculiarly acceptable to Meg, who permitted them more latitude in her premises than she was known to allow to any other body. "They were," she said, "pawky auld carles, that kend whilk side their bread was buttered upon. You never kend of ony o' them ganging to the spring, as they behoved to ca' the stinking well yonder.—Na, na—they were up in the morning—had their parritch, wi' maybe a thimbleful of brandy, and then awa' up into the hills, eat their bit cauld meat on the heather, and cam hame at e'en wi' the creel full of caller trouts, and had them to their dinner, and their quiet cogue of ale, and their drap punch, and were set singing their catches and glees, as they ca'd them, till ten o'clock, and then to bed, wi' God bless ye—and what for no?"

Thirdly, we may commemorate some ranting blades, who also came from the metropolis to visit St Ronan's, attracted by the humours of Meg, and still more by the excellence of her liquor and the cheapness of her reckonings. These were members of the Helter Skelter Club, of the Wildfire Club, and other associations formed for the express purpose of getting rid of care and sobriety. Such dashers occasioned many a racket in Meg's house, and many a *bou-rasque* in Meg's temper. Various were the arts of flattery and violence by which they endeavoured to get supplies of liquor, when Meg's conscience told her they had had too much already. Sometimes they failed, as when the croupier of the Helter Skelter got himself scalded with the mulled wine, in an unsuccessful attempt to coax this formidable virago by a salute; and the excellent president of the Wildfire received a broken head from the keys of the cellar, as he endeavoured to possess himself of these emblems of authority. But little did these dauntless officials care for the exuberant frolics of Meg's temper, which were to them only "pretty Fanny's way"—the *dulces Amar-yllidis iræ*. And Meg, on her part, though she often called them 'drunken ne'er-do-weels, and thorough-bred High Street blackguards,' allowed no other person to speak ill of them in her hearing. 'They were daft callants,' she said, "and that was all—when the drink was in, the wit was out—ye could not put an auld head upon young shouthers—a young cowt will canter, be it up hill or down—and what for no?" was her uniform conclusion.

Nor must we omit, among Meg's steady customers, "faithful amongst the unfaithful found," the copper-nosed sheriff-clerk of the county, who, when summoned by official duty to that district of the shire, warmed by recollections of her double-brewed ale, and her generous Antigua, always advertised that his "Prieves," or "Comp-iss," or whatever other business was in hand, were to proceed on such a day and hour, "within the house of Margaret Dods, vintner in St Ronan's."

We have only farther to notice Meg's mode of conducting herself towards chance travellers, who, knowing nothing of nearer or more fashionable accommodations, or perhaps consulting rather the state of their purse than of their taste, stumbled upon her house of entertainment. Her reception of these was as precarious as the hospitality of a savage nation to sailors shipwrecked on their coast. If

the guests seemed to have made her mansion their free choice—or if she liked their appearance (and her taste was very capricious)—above all, if they seemed pleased with what they got, and little disposed to criticise or give trouble, it was all very well. But if they had come to St Ronan's because the house at the Well was full—or if she disliked what the sailor calls the cut of their jib—or if, above all, they were critical about their accommodations, none so likely as Meg to give them what in her country is called a *sloan*. In fact, she reckoned such persons a part of that ungenerous and ungrateful public, for whose sake she was keeping her house open at a dead loss, and who had left her, as it were, a victim to her patriotic zeal.

Hence arose the different reports concerning the little inn of St Ronan's, which some favoured travellers praised as the neatest and most comfortable old-fashioned house in Scotland, where you had good attendance, and good cheer, at moderate rates; while others, less fortunate, could only talk of the darkness of the rooms, the homeliness of the old furniture, and the detestable bad humour of Meg Dods, the landlady.

Reader, if you come from the more sunny side of the Tweed—or even if, being a Scot, you have had the advantage to be born within the last twenty-five years, you may be induced to think this portrait of Queen Elizabeth, in Dame Quickly's piqued hat and green apron, somewhat overcharged in the features. But I appeal to my own contemporaries, who have known wheel-road, bridle-way, and foot-path for thirty years, whether they do not, every one of them, remember Meg Dods—or somebody very like her. Indeed, so much is this the case, that, about the period I mention, I should have been afraid to have rambled from the Scottish metropolis, in almost any direction, lest I had lighted upon some one of the sisterhood of Dame Quickly, who might suspect me of having showed her up to the public in the character of Meg Dods. At present, though it is possible that some one or two of this peculiar class of wild-cats may still exist, their talons must be much impaired by age; and I think they can do little more than sit, like the Giant Pope in the "Pilgrim's Progress," at the door of their unfrequented caverns, and grin at the pilgrims over whom they used formerly to execute their despotism.

CHAPTER II.

THE GUEST.

Quis novus hic hospes?

Dido apud Virgilium.

Ch'am-maid! The Gemman in the front parlour!

Boots's free Translation of the Æneid.

It was on a fine summer's day that a solitary traveller rode under the old-fashioned arch-way, and alighted in the courtyard of Me-

Dods's inn, and delivered the bridle of his horse to the hump-backed postilion. "Bring my saddle-bags," he said, "into the house—or stay—I am abler, I think, to carry them than you." He then assisted the poor meagre groom to unbuckle the straps which secured the humble and now despised convenience, and meantime gave strict charges that his horse should be unbridled, and put into a clean and comfortable stall, the girths slacked, and a cloth cast over his loins; but that the saddle should not be removed until he himself came to see him dressed.

The companion of his travels seemed in the hostler's eye deserving of his care, being a strong active horse, fit either for the road or field, but rather high in bone from a long journey, though from the state of his skin it appeared the utmost care had been bestowed to keep him in condition. While the groom obeyed the stranger's directions, the latter, with the saddle-bags laid over his arm, entered the kitchen of the inn.

Here he found the landlady herself in none of her most blessed humours. The cook-maid was abroad on some errand, and Meg, in a close review of the kitchen apparatus, was making the unpleasant discovery that trenchers had been broken or cracked, pots and sauce-pans not so accurately scoured as her precise notions of cleanliness required, which, joined to other detections of a more petty description, stirred her bile in no small degree; so that while she disarranged and rearranged the *bink*, she maundered, in an undertone, complaints and menaces against the absent delinquent.

The entrance of a guest did not induce her to suspend this agreeable amusement—she just glanced at him as he entered, then turned her back short on him, and continued her labour and her soliloquy of lamentation. 'Truth is, she thought she recognised in the person of the stranger one of those useful envoys of the commercial community, called, by themselves and the waiters, *Travellers*, par excellence—by others, Riders and Bagmen. Now, against this class of customers Meg had peculiar prejudices; because, there being no shops in the old village of St Ronan's, the said commercial emissaries, for the convenience of their traffic, always took up their abode at the New Inn or Hotel, in the rising and rival village called St Ronan's Well, unless when some straggler, by chance or dire necessity, was compelled to lodge himself at the Auld Town, as the place of Meg's residence began to be generally termed. She had, therefore, no sooner formed the hasty conclusion, that the individual in question belonged to this obnoxious class, than she resumed her former occupation, and continued to soliloquise and apostrophise her absent handmaidens, without even appearing sensible of his presence.

"The huzzy Beenie—the jaud Eppie—the deil's buckie of a callant!—Another plate gane—they'll break me out of house and ha'!"

The traveller, who, with his saddle-bags rested on the back of a chair, had waited in silence for some note of welcome, now saw that, ghost or no ghost, he must speak first, if he intended to have any notice from his landlady.

"You are my old acquaintance, Mistress Margaret Dods?" said the stranger.

"What for no?—and wha are ye that speers?" said Meg in the same breath, and began to rub a brass candlestick with more vehemence than before—the dry tone in which she spoke indicating plainly how little concern she took in the conversation.

"A traveller, good Mistress Dods, who comes to take up his lodgings here for a day or two."

"I am thinking ye will be mista'en," said Meg; "there's nae room for bags or jaugs here—ye've mista'en your road, neighbour—ye maun e'en bundle yoursell a bit farther down hill."

"I see you have not got the letter I sent you, Mistress Dods?" said the guest.

"How should I, man?" answered the hostess; "they have ta'en awa the post-office from us—moved it down till the Spa-well yonder, as they ca'd."

"Why, that is but a step off," observed the guest.

"Ye will get there the sooner," answered the hostess.

"Nay, but," said the guest, "if you had sent there for my letter, you would have learned——"

"I'm no wanting to learn onything at my years," said Meg. "If folk have onything to write to me about, they may gie the letter to John Hislop, the carrier, that has used the road these forty years. As for the letters at the post-mistress's, as they ca' her, 'down by yonder, they may bide in her shop-window, wi' the snaps and bawbee rows, till Beltane or I loose them. I'll never file my fingers with them. Post-mistress, indeed!—Upsetting cutty! I mind her fou weel when she dree'd penance for ante-nup——"

Laughing, but interrupting Meg in good time for the character of the post-mistress, the stranger assured her he had sent his fishing-rod and trunk to her confidential friend the carrier, and that he sincerely hoped she would not turn an old acquaintance out of her premises, especially as he believed he could not sléepe in a bed within five miles of St Ronan's, if he knew that her Blue room was unengaged.

"Fishing-rod!—Auld acquaintance!—Blue room!" echoed Meg, in some surprise; and, facing round upon the stranger, and examining him with some interest and curiosity,—“Ye'll be nae bagman, then, after a'?"

"No," said the traveller; "not since I have laid the saddle-bags out of my hand."

"Weel, I canna say but I am glad of that—I canna bide their yanking way of knapping English at every word.—I have kent decent lads amang them too—What for no?—But that was when they stopped up here whiles, like other douce folk; but since they gaed down, the hail flight of them, like a string of wild-geese, to the new-fashioned hottle yonder, I am told there are as many hellicate tricks played in the travellers' room, as they behove to call it, as if it were fou of drunken young lairds."

"That is because they have not you to keep good order amang them, Mistress Margaret."

"Ay, lad?" replied Meg, "ye are a fine blaw-in-my-lug, to think to cuittle me off sae cleverly!" And, facing about upon her guest,

he honoured him with a more close and curious investigation than he had at first designed to bestow upon him.

All that she remarked was in her opinion rather favourable to the stranger. He was a well-made man, rather above than under the middle size, and apparently betwixt five-and-twenty and thirty years of age—for, although he might, at first glance, have passed for one who had attained the latter period, yet, on a nearer examination, it seemed as if the burning sun of a warmer climate than Scotland, and perhaps some fatigue, both of body and mind, had imprinted the marks of care and of manhood upon his countenance, without abiding the course of years. His eyes and teeth were excellent, and his other features, though they could scarce be termed handsome, expressed sense and acuteness: he bore in his aspect that ease and composure of manner, equally void of awkwardness and affectation, which is said emphatically to mark the gentleman; and although neither the plainness of his dress, nor the total want of the usual attendants, allowed Meg to suppose him a wealthy man, she had little doubt that he was above the rank of her lodgers in general. Amidst these observations, and while she was in the course of making them, the good landlady was embarrassed with various obscure recollections of having seen the object of them formerly; but when, or on what occasion, she was quite unable to call to remembrance. She was particularly puzzled by the cold and sarcastic expression of a countenance, which she could not by any means reconcile with the recollections which it awakened. At length she said, with as much courtesy as she was capable of assuming,—“Either I have seen you before, sir, or some one very like ye?—Ye ken the Blue room, too, and you a stranger in these parts?”

“Not so much a stranger as you may suppose, Meg,” said the stranger, assuming a more intimate tone, “when I call myself Frank Tyrrel.”

“Tirl!” exclaimed Meg, with a tone of wonder—“It’s impossible! You cannot be Francie Tirl, the wild callant that was fishing and bird-nesting here seven or eight years syne—it canna be—Francie was but a callant!”

“But add seven or eight years to that boy’s life, Meg,” said the stranger, gravely, “and you will find you have the man who is now before you.”

“Even sae!” said Meg, with a glance at the reflection of her own countenance in the copper coffee-pot, which she had scoured so brightly that it did the office of a mirror—“Just e’en sae—but folk naun grow auld or die.—But, Mr Tirl, for I maunna ca’ ye Francie now, I am thinking——”

“Call me what you please, good dame,” said the stranger; “it has been so long since I heard any one call me by a name that sounded like former kindness, that such a one is more agreeable to me than a lord’s title would be.”

“Weel, then, Maister Francie—if it be no offence to you—I hope we are no a Nabob?”

“Not I, I can safely assure you, my old friend;—but what an I vere?”

"Naething—only maybe I might bid ye gang farther, and be waur served.—Nabobs, indeed! the country's plagued wi' them. They have raised the price of eggs and pootry for twenty miles round—But what is my business?—They use almaist a' of them the Well down by—they need it, ye ken, for the clearing of their copper complexions, that need scouring as much as my sauce-pans, that naebody can clean but mysell."

"Well, my good friend," said Tyrrel, "the upshot of all this is, I hope, that I am to stay and have dinner here?"

"What for no?" replied Mrs Dodds.

"And that I am to have the Blue room for a night or two—perhaps longer?"

"I dinna ken that," said the dame.—"The Blue room is the best—and they that get neist best are no ill aff in this world."

"Arrange it as you will," said the stranger, "I leave the whole matter to you, mistress.—Meantime I will go see after my horse."

"The merciful man," said Meg, when her guest had left the kitchen, "is merciful to his beast.—He had aye something about him by ordinar, that callant—But eh, sirs! there is a sair change on his cheek-haffit since I saw him last!—He sall no want a good dinner for auld lang syne, that I'se engage for."

Meg set about the necessary preparations with all the natural energy of her disposition, which was so much exerted upon her culinary cares, that her two maids, on their return to the house, escaped the bitter reprimand which she had been previously conning over, in reward for their alleged slatternly negligence. Nay, so far did she carry her complaisance, that when Tyrrel crossed the kitchen to recover his saddle-bags, she formally rebuked Eppie for an idle taupie, for not carrying the gentleman's things to his room.

"I thank you, mistress," said Tyrrel; "but I have some drawings and colours in these saddle-bags, and I always like to carry them myself."

"Ay, and are you at the painting trade yet?" said Meg; "an unco slaister ye used to make with it lang syne."

"I cannot live without it," said Tyrrel; and, taking the saddle-bags, was formally inducted by the maid into a snug apartment, where he soon had the satisfaction to behold a capital dish of minced collops, with vegetables, and a jug of excellent ale, placed on the table by the careful hand of Meg herself. He could do no less, in acknowledgment of the honour, than ask Meg for a bottle of the yellow seal, "if there was any of that excellent claret still left."

"Left?—ay is there, walth of it," said Meg; "I dinna gie it to everybody—Ah! Maister Tirl, ye have not got owre your auld tricks!—I am sure, if ye are painting for your leaving, as you say, a little rum and water would come cheaper, and do ye as much good. But ye maun hae your ain way the day, nae doubt, if ye should never have it again."

Away trudged Meg, her keys clattering as she went, and, after much rummaging, returned with such a bottle of claret as no fashionable tavern could have produced, were it called for by a duke, or at a duke's price; and she seemed not a little gratified when her guest

assured her that he had not yet forgotten its excellent flavour. She retired after these acts of hospitality, and left the stranger to enjoy in quiet the excellent matters which she had placed before him.

But there was that on Tyrrel's mind which defied the enlivening power of good cheer and of wine, which only maketh man's heart glad when that heart has no secret oppression to counteract its influence. Tyrrel found himself on a spot which he had loved in that delightful season, when youth and high spirits awaken all those flattering promises which are so ill kept to manhood. He drew his chair into the embrasure of the old-fashioned window, and, throwing up the sash to enjoy the fresh air, suffered his thoughts to return to former days, while his eyes wandered over objects which they had not looked upon for several eventful years. He could behold beneath his eye the lower part of the decayed village, as its ruins peeped from the umbrageous shelter with which they were shrouded. Still lower down, upon the little holm which forms its churchyard, was seen the Kirk of St Ronan's; and looking yet farther, towards the junction of St Ronan's Burn with the river which traversed the larger dale or valley, he could see, whitened by the western sun, the rising houses, which were either newly finished or in the act of being built, about the medicinal spring.

"Time changes all around us," such was the course of natural enough trite reflection which flowed upon Tyrrel's mind; "wherefore should loves and friendships have a longer date than our dwellings and our monuments?" As he indulged these sombre recollections, his officious landlady disturbed their tenor by her entrance.

"I was thinking to offer you a dish of tea, Maister Francie, just for the sake of auld lang syne, and I'll gar the quean Beenie bring her here, and mask it mysell.—But ye arena done with your wine yet?"

"I am indeed, Mrs Dods," answered Tyrrel; "and I beg you will move the bottle."

"Remove the bottle and the wine no half drank out!" said Meg, displeasure lowering on her brow; "I hope there is nae fault to be found wi' the wine, Maister Tirl?"

To this answer, which was put in a tone resembling defiance, Tyrrel submissively replied, by declaring "the claret not only unexceptionable, but excellent."

"And what for dinna ye drink it, then?" said Meg, sharply; "folk should never ask for mair liquor than they can mak a gude use of. Maybe ye think we have the fashion of the table-dot, as they ca' their new-fangled ordinary down-by yonder, where a' the bottles of vinegar cruets are put awa into a awmry, as they tell me, and I ane wi' the bit dribbles of syndings in it, and a paper about the back o't, to show which of the customers is aught it—there they stand like doctor's drogs—and no an honest Scottish mutchkin will be o' their viols haud, granting it were at the fouest."

"Perhaps," said Tyrrel, willing to indulge the spleen and pre-
 judice of his old acquaintance, "perhaps the wine is not so good
 as to make full measure desirable."

"Ye may say that, lad—and yet them that sell it might afford a

gude penniworth, for they hae it for the making—maist feck of it ne'er saw France or Portugal. But as I was saying—this is no ane of their new-fangled places, where wine is put by for them that canna drink it—when the cork's drawn the bottle maun be drank out—and what for no?—unless it be corkit."

"I agree entirely, Meg," said her guest; "but my ride to-day has somewhat heated me—and I think the dish of tea you promise me will do me more good than to finish my bottle."

"Na, then, the best I can do for you is to put it by, to be sauce for the wild-duck the morn; for I think ye said ye were to bide here for a day or twa."

"It is my very purpose, Meg, unquestionably," replied Tyrrel.

"Sae be it then," said Mrs Dods; "and then the liquor's no loss—it has been seldom sic claret as that has simmered in a saucepan let me tell you that, neighbour;—and I mind the day when, headache or nae headache, ye wad hae been at the hinder-end of that bottle and maybe anither, if ye could have gotten it wiled out of me. But then ye had your cousin to help you—Ah! he was a blythe bairn that Valentine Bulmer!—Ye were a canty callant too, Maister Francie, and muckle ado I had to keep ye baith in order when ye were on the ramble. But ye were a thought doucer than Valentin—But oh! he was a bonny laddie!—wi' e'en like diamonds, cheek like roses, a head like a heather-tap—he was the first I ever saw wear a crap, as they ca' it, but a' body cheats the barber now—and he had a laugh that wad hae raised the dead!—What wi' flyting o' him, and what wi' laughing at him, there was nae minding ony othe body when that Valentine was in the house.—And how is your cousin, Valentine Bulmer, Maister Francie?"

Tyrrel looked down, and only answered with a sigh.

"Ay—and is it even sae?" said Meg; "and has the puir bairn been sae soon removed frae this fashious warld?—Ay—ay—we maun a' gang ae gate—crackit quart-stoups and geisen'd barrels—leak quaighs are we a', and canna keep in the liquor of life—Ohon, sirs—Was the puir lad Bulmer frae Bu'mer Bay, where they land the Hollands, think ye, Maister Francie?—They whiles rin in a pickled tea there too—I hope that is good that I have made you, Maister Francie?"

"Excellent, my good dame," said Tyrrel; but it was in a tone of voice which intimated that she had pressed upon a subject which awakened some unpleasant reflections.

"And when did this puir lad die?" continued Meg, who was no without her share of Eve's qualities, and wished to know something concerning what seemed to affect her guest so particularly; but disappointed her purpose, and at the same time awakened another train of sentiment in her mind, by turning again to the window, and looking upon the distant buildings of St Ronan's Well. As if he had observed for the first time these new objects, he said to Mistress Dods in an indifferent tone, "You have got some gay new neighbours yonder, mistress."

"Neighbours!" said Meg, her wrath beginning to arise, as always did upon any allusion to this sore subject—"Ye may c

them neighbours, if ye like—but the deil flee awa wi' the neighbour-
hood for Meg Dods!"

"I suppose," said Tyrrel, as if he did not observe her displeasure,
"that yonder is the Fox Hotel they told me of?"

"The Fox!" said Meg; "I am sure it is the fox that has carried
off a' my geese.—I might shut up house, Maister Francie, if it was
the thing I lived by—me that has seen a' our gentlefolks' bairns,
and gien them snaps and sugar-biscuit maist of them wi' my ain
hand! They wad hae seen my father's roof-tree fa' down and smoor
ne before they wad hae gien a boddle a-piece to have propped it up—
but they could a' link out their fifty pounds ower head to bigg a hottle
at the Well yonder. And muckle they hae made o't—the bankrupt
body, Sandie Lawson, hasna paid them a bawbee of four terms' rent."

"Surely, mistress, I think if the Well became so famous for its
cures, the least the gentlemen could have done was to make you the
priestess."

"Me priestess! I am nae Quaker, I wot, Maister Francie; and I
never heard of alewife that turned preacher, except Luckie Buchan
in the west.¹ And if I were to preach, I think I have mair the spirit
of a Scottishwoman than to preach in the very room they hae been
dancing in ilka night in the week, Saturday itsell not excepted, and
that till twal o'clock at night. Na, na, Maister Francie; I leave the
like o' that to Mr Simon Chatterly, as they ca' the bit prelati-
cal sprig of divinity from the town yonder, that plays at cards and
dances six days in the week, and on the seventh reads the Common
Prayer-book in the ball-room, with Tam Simson, the drunken bar-
ber, for his clerk."

"I think I have heard of Mr Chatterly," said Tyrrel.

"Ye'll be thinking o' the sermon he has printed," said the angry
lame, "where he compares their nasty puddle of a well yonder to
the pool of Bethesda, like a foul-mouthed, fleecing, feather-headed
fool as he is! He should hae kend that the place got a' its fame in
the times of Black Popery; and though they pat it in St Ronan's
name, I'll never believe for one that the honest man had ony hand
in it; for I hae been tell'd by ane that suld ken, that he was nae
Roman, but only a Cuddie, or Culdee, or suchlike.—But will ye not
make anither dish of tea, Maister Francie? and a wee bit of the diet-
boaf, raised wi' my ain fresh butter, Maister Francie? and no wi'
greasy kitchen-fee, like the seedcake down at the confectioner's
yonder, that has as mony dead flees as carvey in it. Set him up for
confectioner! Wi' a penniworth of rye-meal, and anither of tryacle,
and twa or three carvey-seeds, I will make better confections than
ever cam out of his oven."

"I have no doubt of that, Mrs Dods," said the guest; "and I only
wish to know how these new-comers were able to establish themselves
against a house of such good reputation and old standing as yours?
—It was the virtues of the mineral, I daresay; but how came the
waters to recover a character all at once, mistress?"

¹ The foundress of a sect called Buchanites; a species of Joanna Southcote, who
long after death was expected to return and head her disciples on the road to Jeru-
salem

"I dinna ken, sir—they used to be thought good for naething, but here and there for a pair body's bairn, that had gotten the cruells,¹ and could not afford a penniworth of salts. But my Leddy Penelope Penfeather had fa'an ill, it's like, as nae other body had ever fell ill, and sae she was to be cured some gate naebody was ever cured, which was naething mair than was reasonable—and my leddy, ye ken, has wit at wull, and has a' the wise folk out from Edinburgh at her house at Windywa's yonder, which it is her leddyship's will and pleasure to call Air-castle—and they have a' their different turns, and some can clink verses, wi' their tale, as weel as Rob Burns or Allan Ramsay—and some rin up hill and down dale, knapping the chucky stanes to pieces wi' hammers, like sae mony road-makers run daft—they say it is to see how the warld was made!—and some that play on all manner of ten-stringed instruments—and a wheen sketching souls, that ye may see perched like craws on every craig in the country, e'en working at your ain trade, Maister Francie; forby men that had been in foreign parts, or said they had been there, whilk is a' ane, ye ken, and maybe twa or three draggle-tailed misses, that wear my Leddy Penelope's follies when she has dune wi' them, as her queans of maids wear her second-hand claithes. So, after her leddyship's happy recovery, as they ca'd it, down cam the hail tribe of wild geese, and settled by the Well, to dine thereout on the bare grund, like a wheen tinklers; and they had sangs, and tunes, and healths, nae doubt, in praise of the fountain, as they ca'd the Well, and of Leddy Penelope Penfeather; and, lastly, they behoved a' to take a solemn bumper of the spring, which, as I am tauld, made unco havoc among them or they wan hame; and this they ca'd Picknick, and a plague to them! And sae the jig was begun after her leddyship's pipe, and mony a mad measure has been danced sin' syne; for down cam masons and murgeon-makers, and preachers and player-folk, and Episcopalians and Methodists, and fools and fiddlers, and Papists and pie-bakers, and doctors and drugsters; by the shop-folk, that sell trash and trumpery at three prices—and so^up got the bonny new Well, and down fell the honest auld town of St Ronan's, where blythe decent folk had been heartsome enough for mony a day before ony o' them were born, or ony sic vapouring fancies kittled in their cracked brains."

"What said your landlord, the Laird of St Ronan's, to all this?" said Tyrrel.

"Is't *my* landlord ye are asking after, Maister Francie?—the Laird of St Ronan's is nae landlord of mine, and I think ye might hae minded that.—Na, na, thanks be to Praise! Meg Dods is baith *landlord* and *landleddy*. Ill enough to keep the doors open as it is, let be facing Whitsunday and Martinmas—an auld leather pock there is, Maister Francie, in ane of worthy Maister Bindloose the sheriff-clerk's pigeon-holes, in his dowcot of a closet in the burgh; and therein is baith charter, and sasine, and special service, to boot; and that will be chapter and verse, speer when ye list."

"I had quite forgotten," said Tyrrel, "that the inn was your

¹ *Escrouelles*, King's Evil.

own; though I remember you were a considerable landed proprietor."

"Maybe I am," replied Meg, "maybe I am not; and if I be, what or no?—But as to what the Laird, whose grandfather was my father's andlord, said to the new doings yonder—he just jumped at the ready penny, like a cock at a grossart, and feu'd the bonny holm beside the Well, that they ca'd Saints-Well-holm, that was like the best land in his aught, to be carved, and biggit, and howkit up, just at the pleasure of Jock Ashler the stane-mason, that ca's himsell an arkiteck—there's nae living for new words in this new warld neither, and that's another vex to auld folk such as me—It's a shame o' the young Laird to let his auld patrimony gang the gate it's like to gang, and my heart is sair to see't, though it has but little cause to care what comes of him or his."

"Is it the same Mr Mowbray," said Mr Tyrrel, "who still holds the estate?—the old gentleman, you know, whom I had some dispute with—"

"About hunting moor-fowl upon the Spring-well-head muirs?" said Meg. "Ah, lad! honest Maister Bindloose brought you neatly off there—Na, it's no that honest man, but his son John Mowbray—he t'other has slept down-by in St Ronan's Kirk for these six or seven years."

"Did he leave," asked Tyrrel, with something of a faltering voice, "no other child than the present laird?"

"No other son," said Meg; "and there's e'en eneugh, unless he could have left a better ane."

"He died, then," said Tyrrel, "excepting this son, without children?"

"By your leave, no," said Meg; "there is the lassie, Miss Clara, that keeps house for the laird, if it can be ca'd keeping house, for he's almost aye down at the Well yonder—so a sma' kitchen serves them at the Shaws."

"Miss Clara will have but a dull time of it there during her brother's absence?" said the stranger.

"Out no!—he has her aften jinketing about, and back and forward, wi' a' the fine flichtering fools that come yonder; and clapping palms wi' them, and linking at their dances and daffings. I wuss nae ill come o't, but it's a shame her father's daughter should keep company wi' a' that scauff and raff of physic-students, and writers prentices, and bagmen, and siclike trash as are down at the Well yonder."

"You are severe, Mrs Dods," replied the guest. "No doubt Miss Clara's conduct deserves all sort of freedom."

"I am saying naething against her conduct," said the dame; "and there's nae ground to say onything that I ken of—But I wad hae like draw to like, Maister Francie. I never quarrelled the ball that the gentry use to hae at my bit house a gude wheen years bygane—when they came, the auld folk in their coaches, wi' lang-tailed black horses, and a wheen galliard gallants on their hunting horses, and mony a decent ledly behind her ain goodman, and mony a bonny smirking lassie on her pownie, and wha sae happy as they? And

what for no? And then there was the farmers' ball, wi' the tight lads of yeomen with the brank new blues and the buckskins—These were decent meetings—but then they were a' ae man's bairns that were at them; ilk ane kend ilk other—they danced farmers wi' farmers' daughters at the tane, and gentles wi' gentle blood at the t'other, unless maybe when some of the gentlemen of the Killnakelty Club would gie me a round of the floor mysell, in the way of daffing and fun, and me no able to flyte on them for laughing—I am sure I never grudged these innocent pleasures, although it has cost me maybe a week's redding up ere I got the better of the confusion."

"But, dame," said Tyrrel, "this ceremonial would be a little hard upon strangers like myself, for how were we to find partners in these family parties of yours?"

"Never you fash your thumb about that, Maister Francie," returned the landlady, with a knowing wink.—"Every Jack will find a Jill, gang the world as it may—and, at the warst o't, better hae some fashery in finding a partner for the night, than get yoked with ane that you may not be able to shake off the morn."

"And does that sometimes happen?" asked the stranger.

"Happen!—and is 't amang the Well folk that ye mean?" exclaimed the hostess. "Was it not the last season, as they ca't, no farther gane, that young Sir Bingo Binks, the English lad wi' the red coat, that keeps a mail-coach and drives it himsell, gat cleekit with Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg, the auld Leddy Loupengirth's lang-legged daughter—and they danced sae lang thegither that there was mair said than suld hae been said about it—and the lad would fain have louped back, but the auld leddy held him to his tackle, and the Commissary Court and somebody else made her Leddy Binks in spite of Sir Bingo's heart—and he has never daured take her to his friends in England, but they have just wintered and summered it at the Well ever since—and that is what the Well is good for!"

"And does Clara,—I mean does Miss Mowbray, keep company with such women as these?" said Tyrrel, with a tone of interest which he checked as he proceeded with the question.

"What can she do, puir thing?" said the dame. "She maun keep the company that her brother keeps, for she is clearly dependent—But, speaking of that, I ken what *I* have to do, and that is no little, before it darkens. I have sat clavering with you ower lang, Maister Francie."

And away she marched with a resolved step, and soon the clear octaves of her voice were heard in shrill admonition to her hand-maidens.

Tyrrel paused a moment in deep thought, then took his hat, paid a visit to the stable, where his horse saluted him with feathering ears, and that low amicable neigh with which that animal acknowledges the approach of a loving and beloved friend. Having seen that the faithful creature was in every respect attended to, Tyrrel availed himself of the continued and lingering twilight to visit the old castle, which, upon former occasions, had been his favourite evening walk. He remained while the light permitted, admiring the prospect we attempted to describe in the first chapter, and comparing as in his

former reverie, the faded hues of the glimmering landscape to those of human life, when early youth and hope had ceased to gild them.

A brisk walk to the inn, and a light supper on a Welsh rabbit and the dame's home-brewed, were stimulants of livelier, at least more resigned thoughts—and the Blue bedroom, to the honour of which he had been promoted, received him a contented, if not a cheerful tenant.

CHAPTER III.

ADMINISTRATION.

There must be government in all society—
 Bees have their Queen, and stag herds have their leader;
 Rome had her Consuls, Athens had her Archons,
 And we, sir, have our Managing Committee.

The Album of St Ronan's.

FRANCIS TYRREL was, in the course of the next day, formally settled in his own old quarters, where he announced his purpose of remaining for several days. The old-established carrier of the place brought his fishing-rod and travelling-trunk, with a letter to Meg, dated a week previously, desiring her to prepare to receive an old acquaintance. This annunciation, though something of the latest, Meg received with great complacency, observing, it was a civil attention in Maister Tirl; and that John Hislop, though he was not just sae fast, was far surer than ony post of them a', or express either. She also observed with satisfaction, that there was no gun-case along with her guest's baggage; "for that weary gunning had brought him and her into trouble—the lairds had cried out upon't, as if she made her house a howff for common fowlers and poachers; and yet how could she hinder twa daft hempie callants from taking a start and an owerloup?¹ They had been ower the neighbour's ground they had leave on up to the march, and they werena just to ken meiths when the moorfowl got up."

In a day or two her guest fell into such quiet and solitary habits, that Meg, herself the most restless and bustling of human creatures, began to be vexed for want of the trouble which she expected to have had with him, experiencing, perhaps, the same sort of feeling from his extreme and passive indifference on all points, that a good horseman has for the over-patient steed which he can scarce feel under him. His walks were devoted to the most solitary recesses among the neighbouring woods and hills—his fishing-rod was often left behind him, or carried merely as an apology for sauntering slowly by the banks of some little brooklet—and his success so indifferent, that Meg said the piper of Peebles² would have caught a creelfu' before Maister Francie had made out the half-dozen; so that

¹ The usual expression for a slight encroachment on a neighbour's property.

² The said piper was famous at the mystery.

he was obliged, for peace's sake, to vindicate his character by killing a handsome salmon.

Tyrrel's painting, as Meg called it, went on equally slowly. He often, indeed, showed her the sketches which he brought from his walks, and used to finish at home; but Meg held them very cheap. What signified, she said, a wheen bits of paper, wi' black and white scarts upon them, that he ca'd bushes, and trees, and craigs?—Couldna he paint them wi' green, and blue, and yellow, like the other folk? "Ye will never mak your bread that way, Maister Francie. Ye suld munt up a muckle square of canvass, like Dick Tinto, and paint folk's ainsells, that they like muckle better to see than ony craig in the haill water; and I wadna muckle object even to some of the Wallers coming up and sitting to ye. They waste their time war, I wis—and, I warraint, ye might mak a guinea a-head of them. Dick made twa, but he was an auld used hand, and folk maun creep before they gang."

In answer to these remonstrances, Tyrrel assured her that the sketches with which he busied himself were held of such considerable value, that very often an artist in that line received much higher remuneration for these than for portraits or coloured drawings. He added, that they were often taken for the purpose of illustrating popular poems, and hinted as if he himself were engaged in some labour of that nature.

Eagerly did Meg long to pour forth to Nelly Trotter, the fish-woman,—whose cart formed the only neutral channel of communication between the Auld Town and the Well, and who was in favour with Meg, because, as Nelly passed her door in her way to the Well, she always had the first choice of her fish,—the merits of her lodger as an artist. Luckie Dods had, in truth, been so much annoyed and bullied, as it were, with the report of clever persons, accomplished in all sorts of excellence, arriving day after day at the Hotel, that she was overjoyed in this fortunate opportunity to triumph over them in their own way; and it may be believed that the excellences of her lodger lost nothing by being trumpeted through her mouth.

"I maun hae the best of the cart, Nelly—if you and me can gree—for it is for ane of the best of painters. Your fine folk down yonder would gie their lugs to look at what he has been doing—he gets gowd in goupins, for three downright scarts and three cross anes—And he is no an ungrateful loon, like Dick Tinto, that had nae sooner my good five-and-twenty shillings in his pocket than he gaed down to birl it awa at their bonny hottle yonder; but a decent quiet lad, that kens when he is weel aff, and bides still at the auld howff—And what for no?—Tell them all this, and hear what they will say till't."

"Indeed, mistress, I can tell ye that already, without stirring my shanks for the matter," answered Nelly Trotter; "they will e'en say that ye are ae auld fule, and me anither, that may hae some judgment in cock-bree or in skate-rumples, but maunna fash our beards about onything else."

"Wad they say sae, the frontless villains? and me been a house-keeper this thirty year!" exclaimed Meg; "I wadna hae them say

t to my face! But I am no speaking without warrant—for what an I had spoken to the minister, lass, and shown him ane of the loose scarts of paper that Maister Tirl leaves fleeing about his room?—and what an he had said he had kend Lord Bidmore gie five guineas for the waur on't? and a' the warld kens he was lang tutor in the Bidmore family."

"Troth," answered her gossip, "I doubt if I was to tell a' this they would hardly believe me, mistress; for there are sae mony judges amang them, and they think sae muckle of themsells, and sae little of other folk, that unless ye were to send down the bit picture, I am no thinking they will believe a word that I can tell them."

"No believe what an honest woman says—let abee to say twa o' them?" exclaimed Meg; "Oh the unbelieving generation!—Weel, Nelly, since my back is up, ye sall tak down the picture, or sketching, or whatever it is (though I thought sketchers¹ were aye made of airn), and shame wi' it, the conceited crew that they are.—But see and bring't back wi' ye again, Nelly, for it's a thing of value; and trustna it out o' your hand, *that* I charge you, for I lippen no muckle to their honesty.—And, Nelly, ye may tell them he has an illustrated poem—*illustrated*—mind the word, Nelly—that is to be stuck as fou o' the like o' that, as ever turkey was larded wi' dabs o' bacon."

Thus furnished with her credentials, and acting the part of a herald betwixt two hostile countries, honest Nelly switched her little fish-cart downwards to St Ronan's Well.

In watering-places, as in other congregated assemblies of the human species, various kinds of government have been dictated, by chance, caprice, or convenience; but in almost all of them some sort of direction has been adopted, to prevent the consequences of anarchy. Sometimes the sole power has been vested in a Master of Ceremonies; but this, like other despotisms, has been of late unfashionable, and the powers of this great officer have been much limited even at Bath, where Nash once ruled with undisputed supremacy. Committees of management, chosen from among the most steady guests, have been in general resorted to as a more liberal mode of sway, and to such was confided the administration of the infant republic of St Ronan's Well. This little senate, it must be observed, had the more difficult task in discharging their high duties, that, like those of other republics, their subjects were divided into two jarring and contending factions, who every day eat, drank, danced, and made merry together, hating each other all the while with all the animosity of political party, endeavouring by every art to secure the adherence of each guest who arrived, and ridiculing the absurdities and follies of each other with all the wit and bitterness of which they were masters.

At the head of one of these parties was no less a personage than Lady Penelope Penfeather, to whom the establishment owed its fame, nay, its existence; and whose influence could only have been balanced by that of the Lord of the Manor, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, or, as he was called usually by the company who affected what Meg

¹ Skates are called sketchers in Scotland.

called knapping English, the Squire, who was leader of the opposite faction.

The rank and fortune of the lady, her pretensions to beauty as well as talent (though the former was something faded), and the consequence which she arrogated to herself as a woman of fashion, drew round her painters, and poets, and philosophers, and men of science, and lecturers, and foreign adventurers, *et hoc genus omne*.

On the contrary, the Squire's influence, as a man of family and property in the immediate neighbourhood, who actually kept greyhounds and pointers, and at least talked of hunters and of racers, ascertained him the support of the whole class of bucks, half and whole breed, from the three next counties; and if more inducements were wanting, he could grant his favourites the privilege of shooting over his moors, which is enough to turn the head of a young Scottishman at any time. Mr Mowbray was of late especially supported in his pre-eminence by a close alliance with Sir Bingo Binks, a sapient English Baronet, who, ashamed, as many thought, to return to his own country, had set him down at the Well of Saint Ronan's, to enjoy the blessing which the Caledonian Hymen had so kindly forced on him, in the person of Miss Rachel Bonmyrigg. As this gentleman actually drove a regular-built mail-coach, not in any respect differing from that of his Majesty, only that it was more frequently overturned, his influence with a certain set was irresistible, and the Squire of St Ronan's, having the better sense of the two, contrived to reap the full benefit of the consequence attached to his friendship.

These two contending parties were so equally balanced, that the predominance of the influence of either was often determined by the course of the sun. Thus, in the morning and forenoon, when Lady Penelope led forth her herd to lawn and shady bower, whether to visit some ruined monument of ancient times, or eat their pic-nic luncheon, to spoil good paper with bad drawings, and good verses with repetition—in a word,

“To rave, recite, and madden round the land,”

her ladyship's empire over the loungers seemed uncontrolled and absolute, and all things were engaged in the *tourbillon*, of which she formed the pivot and centre. Even the hunters, and shooters, and hard drinkers were sometimes fain reluctantly to follow in her train, sulking and quizzing and flouting at her solemn festivals, besides encouraging the younger nymphs to giggle when they should have looked sentimental. But after dinner the scene was changed, and her ladyship's sweetest smiles and softest invitations were often insufficient to draw the neutral part of the company to the tea-room; so that her society was reduced to those whose constitution or finances rendered early retirement from the dining-parlour a matter of convenience, together with the more devoted and zealous of her own immediate dependents and adherents. Even the faith of the latter was apt to be debauched. Her ladyship's poet-laureate, in whose behalf she was teasing each new-comer for subscriptions, got sufficiently independent to sing in her ladyship's presence, at supper, a

ing of rather equivocal meaning; and her chief painter, who was employed upon an illustrated copy of the Loves of the Plants, was, another time, seduced into such a state of pot-valour, that, upon her ladyship's administering her usual dose of criticism upon his works, he not only bluntly disputed her judgment, but talked something of his right to be treated like a gentleman.

These feuds were taken up by the Managing Committee, who interceded for the penitent offenders on the following morning, and obtained their re-establishment in Lady Penelope's good graces upon moderate terms. Many other acts of moderating authority they performed, much to the assuaging of faction and the quiet of the Wellers; and so essential was their government to the prosperity of the place, that, without them, St Ronan's spring would probably have been speedily deserted. We must therefore give a brief sketch of that potent Committee, which both factions, acting as if on a self-denying ordinance, had combined to invest with the reins of government. Each of its members appeared to be selected, as Fortunio, in the fairy-tale, chose his followers, for his peculiar gifts. First on the list stood the MAN OF MEDICINE, Dr Quentin Quackleben, who claimed the right to regulate medical matters at the spring, upon the principle which of old assigned the property of a newly-discovered country to the bucanier who committed the earliest piracy on its shores. He acknowledged the Doctor's merit, as having been first to proclaim and vindicate the merits of these healing fountains, had occasioned his being universally installed First Physician and Man of Science, which last qualification he could apply to all purposes, from the boiling of an egg to the giving a lecture. He was, indeed, qualified, like many of his profession, to spread both the bane and the antidote before a dyspeptic patient, being as knowing a gastronome as Dr Redgill himself, or any other worthy physician who has written for the benefit of the *cuisine*, from Dr Moncrieff of Tippermalloch, to the late Dr Hunter of York, and the present Dr Kitchener of London. But pluralities are always invidious, and therefore the Doctor prudently relinquished the office of caterer and head-carver to the Man of Taste, who occupied regularly, and *ex officio*, the head of the table, reserving to himself the occasional privilege of critiquing, and a principal share in consuming, the good things which the common entertainment afforded. We have only to sum up this brief account of the learned Doctor, by informing the reader that he was a tall, lean, beetle-browed man, with an ill-made, black scratching, that stared out on either side from his lantern jaws. He resided the months out of the twelve at St Ronan's, and was supposed to make an indifferent good thing of it,—especially as he played whist to admiration.

First in place, though perhaps second to the Doctor in real authority, was Mr Winterblossom; a civil sort of person, who was nicely precise in his address, wore his hair curled and dressed with powder, and knee-buckles set with Bristol stones, and a seal-ring as large as John Falstaff's. In his heyday he had a small estate, which he had spent like a gentleman, by mixing with the gay world. He was, in short, one of those respectable links that connect the coxcombs of

the present day with those of the last age, and could compare, in his own experience, the follies of both. In latter days he had sense enough to extricate himself from his course of dissipation, though with impaired health and impoverished fortune.

Mr Winterblossom now lived upon a moderate annuity, and had discovered a way of reconciling his economy with much company and made dishes, by acting as perpetual president of the table d'hôte at the Well. Here he used to amuse the society by telling stories about Garrick, Foote, Bonnel Thornton, and Lord Kelly, and delivering his opinions in matters of taste and vertu. An excellent carver, he knew how to help each guest to what was precisely his due, and never failed to reserve a proper slice as the reward of his own labours. To conclude, he was possessed of some taste in the fine arts, at least in painting and music, although it was rather of the technical kind, than that which warms the heart and elevates the feelings. There was, indeed, about Winterblossom nothing that was either warm or elevated. He was shrewd, selfish, and sensual; the last two of which qualities he screened from observation under a specious varnish of exterior complaisance. Therefore, in his professed and apparent anxiety to do the honours of the table to the most punctilious point of good breeding, he never permitted the attendants upon the public taste to supply the wants of others, until all his own private comforts had been fully arranged and provided for.

Mr Winterblossom was also distinguished for possessing a few curious engravings, and other specimens of art, with the exhibition of which he occasionally beguiled a wet morning at the public room. They were collected "*viis et modis*," said the Man of Law, another distinguished member of the Committee, with a knowing cock of his eye, to his next neighbour.

Of this person little need be said. He was a large-boned, loud-voiced, red-faced old man, named Meiklewham; a country writer, or attorney, who managed the matters of the Squire, much to the profit of one or other,—if not of both. His nose projected from the front of his broad vulgar face like the style of an old sundial, twisted all of one side. He was as great a bully in his profession, as if it had been military instead of civil; conducted the whole technicalities concerning the cutting up the Saint's Well-haugh, so much lamented by Dame Dods, into building-stances, and was on excellent terms with Doctor Quackleben, who always recommended him to make the wills of his patients.

After the Man of Law comes Captain Hector MacTurk, a Highland lieutenant on half-pay, and that of ancient standing; one who preferred toddy of the strongest to wine, and in that fashion and cold drams finished about a bottle of whisky *per diem*, whenever he could come by it. He was called the Man of Peace, on the same principle which assigns to constables, Bow-street runners, and such like, who carry bludgeons to break folk's heads, and are perpetually and officially employed in scenes of riot, the title of peace-officers—that is, because by his valour he compelled others to act with discretion. The Captain was the general referee in all those abortive quarrels, which, at a place of this kind, are so apt to occur at night

and to be quietly settled in the morning ; and occasionally adopted a quarrel himself, by way of taking down any guest who was unusually pugacious. This occupation procured Captain MacTurk a good deal of respect at the Well ; for he was precisely that sort of person who is ready to fight with any one—whom no one can find an apology for declining to fight with,—in fighting with whom considerable danger was incurred, for he was ever and anon showing that he could snuff a candle with a pistol ball,—and lastly, through fighting with whom no eclat or credit could redound to the antagonist. He always wore a blue coat and red collar, had a supercilious taciturnity of manner, ate sliced leeks with his cheese, and resembled in complexion a Dutch red-herring.

Still remains to be mentioned the Man of Religion—the gentle Mr Simon Chatterly, who had strayed to St Ronan's Well from the banks of Cam or Isis, and who piqued himself, first on his Greek, and secondly on his politeness to the ladies. During all the week-days, as Dame Dods has already hinted, this reverend gentleman was the partner at the whist-table, or in the ballroom, to what maid or matron soever lacked a partner at either ; and on the Sundays he read prayers in the public-room to all who chose to attend. He was also a deviser of charades, and an unriddler of riddles ; he played a little on the flute, and was Mr Winterblossom's principal assistant in contriving those ingenious and romantic paths, by which, as by the zigzags which connect military parallels, you were enabled to ascend to the top of the hill behind the hotel, which commands so beautiful a prospect, at exactly that precise angle of ascent which entitles a gentleman to offer his arm, and a lady to accept it, with perfect propriety.

There was yet another member of this Select Committee, Mr Michael Meredith, who might be termed the Man of Mirth, or, if you please, the Jack Pudding to the company, whose business it was to crack the best joke, and sing the best song—he could. Unluckily, however, this functionary was for the present obliged to absent himself from St Ronan's ; for, not recollecting that he did not actually bear the privileged motley of his profession, he had passed some jest upon Captain MacTurk, which cut so much to the quick that Mr Meredith was fain to go to goat-whey quarters, at some ten miles' distance, and remain there in a sort of concealment, until the affair should be made up through the mediation of his brethren of the committee.

Such were the honest gentlemen who managed the affairs of this singular settlement, with as much impartiality as could be expected. They were not indeed without their own secret predilections ; for the lawyer and the soldier privately inclined to the party of the quire, while the parson, Mr Meredith, and Mr Winterblossom, were more devoted to the interests of Lady Penelope ; so that Doctor Quackleben alone, who probably recollected that the gentlemen were as liable to stomach complaints as the ladies to nervous disorders, seemed the only person who preserved in word and deed the most rigid neutrality. Nevertheless, the interests of the establishment being very much at the heart of this honourable council, and each

feeling his own profit, pleasure, or comfort, in some degree involved, they suffered not their private affections to interfere with their public duties, but acted every one in his own sphere for the public benefit of the whole community.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INVITATION.

Thus painters write their names at Co.
PRIOR.

THE clamour which attends the removal of dinner from a public room had subsided; the clatter of plates, and knives and forks—the bustling tread of awkward boobies of country servants, kicking each other's shins, and wrangling, as they endeavour to rush out of the door three abreast—the clash of glasses and tumblers, borne to earth in the tumult—the shrieks of the landlady—the curses, not loud, but deep, of the landlord—had all passed away; and those of the company who had servants had been accommodated by their respective Ganymedes with such remnants of their respective bottles of wine, spirits, &c., as the said Ganymedes had not previously consumed, while the rest, broken in to such observance by Mr Winterblossom, waited patiently until the worthy president's own special and multifarious commissions had been executed by a tidy young woman and a lumpish lad, the regular attendants belonging to the house, but whom he permitted to wait on no one till, as the hymn says,

“All his wants were well supplied.”

“And, Dinah—my bottle of pale sherry, Dinah—place it on this side—there is a good girl;—and, Toby—get my jug with the hot water—and let it be boiling—and don't spill it on Lady Penelope, if you can help it, Toby.”

“No—for her ladyship has been in hot water to-day already,” said the Squire; a sarcasm to which Lady Penelope only replied with a look of contempt.

“And, Dinah, bring the sugar—the soft East India sugar, Dinah—and a lemon, Dinah, one of those which came fresh to-day—Go fetch it from the bar, Toby—and don't tumble downstairs, if you can help it.—And Dinah—stay, Dinah—the nutmeg, Dinah, and the ginger, my good girl—And, Dinah—put the cushion up behind my back—and the footstool to my foot, for my toe is something the worse of my walk with your ladyship this morning to the top of Belvidère.”

“Her ladyship may call it what she pleases in common parlance,” said the writer; “but it must stand Munt-grunzie in the stamped paper, being so nominated in the ancient writs and evidents thereof.”

“And, Dinah,” continued the president, “lift up my handkerchief—and—a bit of biscuit, Dinah—and—and I do not think I want anything else—Look to the company, my good girl.—I have the honour

to drink the company's very good health—Will your ladyship honour me by accepting a glass of negus?—I learned to make negus from old Dartineuf's son.—He always used East India sugar, and added a tamarind—it improves the flavour infinitely.—Dinah, see your father sends for some tamarinds—Dartineuf knew a good thing almost as well as his father—I met him at Bath in the year—let me see—Garlick was just taking leave, and that was in," &c. &c. &c.—“And what is this now, Dinah?” he said, as she put into his hand a roll of paper. “Something that Nelly Trotter” (Trotting Nelly, as the company called her) “brought from a sketching gentleman that lives at the woman's (thus bluntly did the upstart minx describe the reverend Mrs Margaret Dods) “at the Cleikum of Aultoun yonder”—A name, by the way, which the inn had acquired from the use which the saint upon the sign-post was making of his pastoral crook.

“Indeed, Dinah?” said Mr Winterblossom, gravely taking out his spectacles, and wiping them before he opened the roll of paper; “some boy's daubing, I suppose, whose pa and ma wish to get him into the Trustees' School, and so are beating about for a little interest.—But I am drained dry—I put three lads in last season; and if it had not been my particular interest with the secretary, who asks my opinion now and then, I could not have managed it. But giff gaff, say I.—Eh! What, in the devil's name, is this?—Here is both force and keeping—Who can this be, my lady?—Do but see the sky-line—why, this is really a little bit—an exquisite little bit—Who the devil can it be? and how can he have stumbled upon the dog-hole in the Old Town, and the snarling b—— I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons—that kennels there?”

“I daresay, my lady,” said a little miss of fourteen, her eyes growing rounder and rounder, and her cheeks redder and redder, as she found herself speaking, and so many folks listening—“Oh, la! I daresay it is the same gentleman we met one day in the Low-wood walk, that looked like a gentleman, and yet was none of the company, and that you said was a handsome man.”

“I did not say handsome, Maria,” replied her ladyship; “ladies never say men are handsome—I only said he looked genteel and interesting.”

“And that, my lady,” said the young parson, bowing and smiling, “is, I will be judged by the company, the more flattering compliment of the two—We shall be jealous of this Unknown presently.”

“Nay, but,” continued the sweetly communicative Maria, with some real and some assumed simplicity, “your ladyship forgets—for you said presently after, you were sure he was no gentleman, for he did not run after you with your glove which you had dropped—and so I went back myself to find your ladyship's glove, and he never offered to help me, and I saw him closer than your ladyship did, and I am sure he is handsome, though he is not very civil.”

“You speak a little too much and too loud, miss,” said Lady Penelope, a natural blush reinforcing the *nuance* of rouge by which it was usually superseded.

“What say you to that, Squire Mowbray?” said the elegant Sir Bingo Binks.

"A fair challenge to the field, Sir Bingo," answered the Squire; "when a lady throws down the gauntlet, a gentleman may throw the handkerchief."

"I have always the benefit of *your* best construction, Mr Mowbray," said the lady, with dignity. "I suppose Miss Maria has contrived this pretty story for your amusement. I can hardly answer to Mr Digges, for bringing her into company where she receives encouragement to behave so."

"Nay, nay, my lady," said the president, "you must let the jest pass by; and since this is really such an admirable sketch, you must honour us with your opinion, whether the company can consistently with propriety make any advances to this man."

"In my opinion," said her ladyship, the angry spot still glowing on her brow, "there are enough of *men* among us already—I wish I could say gentlemen—As matters stand, I see little business *ladies* can have at St Ronan's."

This was an intimation which always brought the Squire back to good-breeding, which he could make use of when he pleased. He deprecated her ladyship's displeasure, until she told him, in returning good-humour, that she really would not trust him unless he brought his sister to be security for his future politeness.

"Clara, my lady," said Mowbray, "is a little wilful; and I believe your ladyship must take the task of unharbouring her into your own hands. What say you to a gipsy party up to my old shop?—It is a bachelor's house—you must not expect things in much order; but Clara would be honoured——"

The Lady Penelope eagerly accepted the proposal of something like a party, and, quite reconciled with Mowbray, began to inquire whether she might bring the stranger artist with her, "that is," said her ladyship, looking to Dinah, "if he be a gentleman."

Here Dinah interposed her assurance, "that the gentleman at Meg Dods's was quite and clean a gentleman, and an illustrated poet besides."

"An illustrated poet, Dinah?" said Lady Penelope; "you must mean an illustrious poet."

"I dare to say your ladyship is right," said Dinah, dropping a curtsy.

A joyous flutter of impatient anxiety was instantly excited through all the blue-stocking faction of the company, nor were the news totally indifferent to the rest of the community. The former belonged to that class who, like the young Ascanius, are ever beating about in quest of a tawny lion, though they are much more successful in now and then starting a great bore;¹ and the others, having left all their own ordinary affairs and subjects of interest at home, were glad to make a matter of importance of the most trivial occurrence. A mighty poet, said the former class—who could it possibly be?—All names were recited—all Britain scrutinised, from Highland hills to

¹ The one or the other was equally *in votis* to Ascanius,—

"Optat aprum, aut fulyum descendere monte leonem."

Modern Trojans make a great distinction betwixt these two objects of chase.

the Lakes of Cumberland—from Sydenham Common to Saint James's Place—even the Banks of the Bosphorus were explored for some name which might rank under this distinguished epithet.—And then, besides his illustrious poesy, to sketch so inimitably!—who *could* it be? And all the gapers, who had nothing of their own to suggest, answered with the antistrophe, “Who could it be?”

The Claret-Club, which comprised the choicest and firmest adherents of Squire Mowbray and the Baronet—men who scorned that the reversion of one bottle of wine should furnish forth the feast of to-morrow, though caring nought about either of the fine arts in question, found out an interest of their own, which centred in the same individual.

“I say, little Sir Bingo,” said the Squire, “this is the very fellow that we saw down at the Willowslack on Saturday—he was tog'd gnostically enough, and cast twelve yards of line with one hand—the fly fell like a thistledown on the water.”

“Uich!” answered the party he addressed, in the accents of a dog choking in the collar.

“We saw him pull out the salmon yonder,” said Mowbray; “you remember—clean fish—the tide-ticks on his gills—weighed, I dare say, a matter of eighteen pounds.”

“Sixteen!” replied Sir Bingo, in the same tone of strangulation.

“None of your rigs, Bing!” said his companion; “nearer eighteen than sixteen!”

“Nearer sixteen, by——!”

“Will you go a dozen of blue on it to the company?” said the Squire.

“No, d— me!” croaked the Baronet—“to our own set I will.”

“Then, I say done!” quoth the Squire.

And “Done!” responded the Knight; and out came their red pocket-books.

“But who shall decide the bet?” said the Squire. “The genius himself, I suppose; they talk of asking him here, but I suppose he will scarce mind quizzes like them.”

“Write myself—John Mowbray,” said the Baronet.

“You, Baronet!—You write!” answered the Squire, “d— me, hat cock won't fight—you won't.”

“I will,” growled Sir Bingo, more articulately than usual.

“Why, you can't!” said Mowbray. “You never wrote a line in our life, save those you were whipped for at school.”

“I can write—I will write!” said Sir Bingo. “Two to one I will.”

And there the affair rested, for the counsel of the company were in high consultation concerning the most proper manner of opening communication with the mysterious stranger; and the voice of Mr Winterblossom, whose tones, originally fine, age had reduced to alsetto, was calling upon the whole party for “Order, order!” So that the bucks were obliged to lounge in silence, with both arms declined on the table, and testifying, by coughs and yawns, their indifference to the matters in question, while the rest of the company debated upon them, as if they were matters of life and death.

"A visit from one of the gentlemen—Mr Winterblossom, if he would take the trouble, in name of the company at large—would, Lady Penelope Penfeather presumed to think, be a necessary preliminary to an invitation."

Mr Winterblossom was "quite of her ladyship's opinion, and would gladly have been the personal representative of the company at St Ronan's Well—but it was up hill—her ladyship knew his tyrant, the gout, was hovering upon the frontiers—there were other gentlemen, younger, and more worthy to fly at the lady's command than an ancient Vulcan like him,—there was the valiant Mars and the eloquent Mercury."

Thus speaking, he bowed to Captain MacTurk and the Rev. Mr Simon Chatterly, and reclined on his chair, sipping his negus with the self-satisfied smile of one who, by a pretty speech, has rid himself of a troublesome commission. At the same time, by an act probably of mental absence, he put in his pocket the drawing, which, after circulating around the table, had returned back to the chair of the president, being the point from which it had set out.

"By Cot, madam," said Captain MacTurk, "I should be proud to obey your leddyship's commands—but, by Cot, I never call first on any man that never called upon me at all, unless it were to carry him a friend's message, or suchlike."

"Twig the old connoisseur," said the Squire to the Knight.—"He is condiddling the drawing."

"Go it, Johnnie Mowbray—pour it into him," whispered Sir Bingo.

"Thank ye for nothing, Sir Bingo," said the Squire, in the same tone. "Winterblossom is one of us—*was* one of us at least—and won't stand the ironing. He has his Wogdens still, that were right things in his day, and can hit the hay-stack with the best of us—but stay, they are halloooing on the parson."

They were indeed busied on all hands to obtain Mr Chatterly's consent to wait on the Genius unknown; but though he smiled and simpered, and was absolutely incapable of saying No, he begged leave, in all humility, to decline that commission. "The truth was," he pleaded in his excuse, "that having one day walked to visit the old Castle of St Ronan's, and returning through the Auld Town, as it was popularly called, he had stopped at the door of the *Cleikum*" (pronounced *Anglicé*, with the open diphthong), "in hopes to get a glass of syrup of capillaire, or a draught of something cooling; and had in fact expressed his wishes, and was knocking pretty loudly, when a sash-window was thrown suddenly up, and ere he was aware what was about to happen, he was soused with a deluge of water (as he said), while the voice of an old hag from within assured him, that if that did not cool him there was another bidding him,—an intimation which induced him to retreat in all haste from the repetition of this shower-bath."

All laughed at the account of the chaplain's misfortune, the history of which seemed to be wrung from him reluctantly, by the necessity of assigning some weighty cause for declining to execute the ladies' commands. But the Squire and Baronet continued their mirth far longer than decorum allowed, flinging themselves back in their

chairs, with their hands thrust into their side-pockets, and their mouths expanded with unrestrained enjoyment, until the sufferer, angry, disconcerted, and endeavouring to look scornful, incurred another general burst of laughter on all hands.

When Mr Winterblossom had succeeded in restoring some degree of order, he found the mishaps of the young divine proved as intimidating as ludicrous. Not one of the company chose to go Envoy Extraordinary to the dominions of Queen Meg, who might be suspected of paying little respect to the sanctity of an ambassador's person. And what was worse, when it was resolved that a civil card from Mr Winterblossom, in the name of the company, should be sent to the stranger, instead of a personal visit, Dinah informed them that she was sure no one about the house could be bribed to carry up a letter of the kind; for when such an event had taken place two summers since, Meg, who construed it into an attempt to seduce from her tenement the invited guest, had so handled a plough-boy who carried the letter, that he fled the country-side altogether, and never thought himself safe till he was at a village ten miles off, where it was afterwards learned he enlisted with a recruiting party, choosing rather to face the French than to return within the sphere of Meg's displeasure.

Just while they were agitating this new difficulty, a prodigious clamour was heard without, which, to the first apprehensions of the company, seemed to be Meg, in all her terrors, come to anticipate the proposed invasion. Upon inquiry, however, it proved to be her gossip, Trotting Nelly, or Nelly Trotter, in the act of forcing her way up-stairs, against the united strength of the whole household of the hotel, to reclaim Luckie Dods's picture, as she called it. This made the connoisseur's treasure tremble in his pocket, who, thrusting a half-crown into Toby's hand, exhorted him to give it her, and try his influence in keeping her back. Toby, who knew Nelly's nature, put the half-crown into his own pocket, and snatched up a gill-stoup of whisky from the sideboard. Thus armed, he boldly confronted the virago, and interposing a *remora*, which was able to check poor Nelly's course in her most determined moods, not only succeeded in averting the immediate storm which approached the company in general, and Mr Winterblossom in particular, but brought the guests the satisfactory information, that Trotting Nelly had agreed, after she had slept out her nap in the barn, to convey their commands to the Unknown of Cleikum of Aultoun.

Mr Winterblossom, therefore, having authenticated his proceedings, by inserting in the Minutes of the Committee the authority which he had received, wrote his card in the best style of diplomacy, and sealed it with the seal of the Spa, which bore something like a nymph, seated beside what was designed to represent an urn.

The rival factions, however, did not trust entirely to this official invitation. Lady Penelope was of opinion that they should find some way of letting the stranger—a man of talent unquestionably—understand that there were in the society to which he was invited, spirits of a more select sort, who felt worthy to intrude themselves on his solitude.

Accordingly, her ladyship imposed upon the elegant Mr Chatterly the task of expressing the desire of the company to see the unknown artist, in a neat occasional copy of verses. The poor gentleman's muse, however, proved unpropitious; for he was able to proceed no farther than two lines in half an hour, which, coupled with its variations, we insert from the blotted manuscript, as Dr Johnson has printed the alterations in Pope's version of the Iliad :

1. *Maids.* 2. *Dames.* *unity joining.*
 The [nymphs] of St Ronan's [in purpose combining]
 1. *Swain.* 2. *Man.*
 To the [youth] who is great both in verse and designing,
 - - - - - dining.

The eloquence of a prose billet was necessarily resorted to in the absence of the heavenly muse, and the said billet was secretly intrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The same trusty emissary, when refreshed by her nap among the pease-straw, and about to harness her cart for her return to the sea-coast (in the course of which she was to pass the Aultoun), received another card, written, as he had threatened, by Sir Bingo Binks himself, who had given himself this trouble to secure the settlement of the bet; conjecturing that a man with a fashionable exterior, who could throw twelve yards of line at a cast with such precision, might consider the invitation of Winterblossom as that of an old twaddler, and care as little for the good graces of an affected blue-stockings and her *côterie*, whose conversation, in Sir Bingo's mind, relished of nothing but of weak tea and bread-and-butter. Thus the happy Mr Francis Tyrrel received, considerably to his surprise, no less than three invitations at once from the Well of St Ronan's.

CHAPTER V.

EPISTOLARY ELOQUENCE.

But how can I answer, since first I must read thee?
 PRIOR.

DESIROUS of authenticating our more important facts, by as many original documents as possible, we have, after much research, enabled ourselves to present the reader with the following accurate transcripts of the notes intrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The first ran thus :—

“Mr Winterblossom [of Silverhed] has the commands of Lady Penelope Penfeather, Sir Bingo and Lady Binks, Mr and Miss Mowbray [of St Ronan's], and the rest of the company at the Hotel and Tentine Inn of St Ronan's Well, to express their hope that the gentleman lodged at the Cleikum Inn, Old Town of St Ronan's will favour them with his company at the Ordinary, as early and a

ten as may suit his convenience. The COMPANY think it necessary send this intimation, because, according to the RULES of the place, the Ordinary can only be attended by such gentlemen and ladies as lodge at St Ronan's Well; but they are happy to make a distinction in favour of a gentleman so distinguished for success in the fine arts.

Mr ———, residing at Cleikum. If Mr ——— should be inclined, upon becoming farther acquainted with the COMPANY and RULES of the Place, to remove his residence to the Well, Mr Winterblossom, though he would not be understood to commit himself by a positive assurance to that effect, is inclined to hope that an arrangement might be made, notwithstanding the extreme crowd of the season, to accommodate Mr ——— at the lodging-house called Lilliput-hall. It will much conduce to facilitate this negotiation, if Mr ——— would have the goodness to send an exact note of his nature, as Captain Rannletree seems disposed to resign the folding-bed at Lilliput-hall, on account of his finding it rather deficient in length. Mr Winterblossom begs farther to assure Mr ——— of the esteem in which he holds this genius, and of his high personal consideration.

“For ———, Esquire,
Cleikum Inn, Old Town of
St Ronan's.

“The Public Rooms,
Hotel and Tontine, St Ronan's Well,
&c. &c. &c.”

The above card was written (we love to be precise in matters concerning orthography) in a neat, round, clerk-like hand, which, like Mr Winterblossom's character in many particulars, was most accurate and commonplace, though betraying an affectation both of flourish and of facility.

The next billet was a contrast to the diplomatic gravity and accuracy of Mr Winterblossom's official communication, and ran thus,—the young divine's academic jests and classical flowers of eloquence being mingled with some wild-flowers from the teeming fancy of Lady Penelope:—

“A choir of Dryads and Naiads, assembled at the healing spring of St Ronan's, have learned with surprise that a youth, gifted by Apollo, when the Deity was prodigal, with two of his most esteemed endowments, wanders at will among their domains, frequenting grove and river, without once dreaming of paying homage to its tutelary deities. He is, therefore, summoned to their presence, and prompt obedience will insure him forgiveness; but in case of contumacy, let him beware how he again essays either the lyre or the pallet.

“*Postscript.*—The adorable Penelope, long enrolled among the goddesses for her beauty and virtues, gives Nectar and Ambrosia, which mortals call tea and cake, at the Public Rooms, near the Sacred Spring, on Thursday evening, at eight o'clock, when the Muses never fail to attend. The stranger's presence is requested to participate in the delights of the evening.

“*Second Postscript.*—A shepherd, ambitiously aiming at more

accommodation than his narrow cot affords, leaves it in a day or two.

'Assuredly the thing is to be hired.'

As You Like It.

"*Postscript third.*—Our Iris, whom mortals know as Trotting Nelly in her tartan cloak, will bring us the stranger's answer to our celestial summons."

This letter was written in a delicate Italian hand, garnished with fine hair-strokes and dashes, which were sometimes so dexterously thrown off as to represent lyres, pallets, vases, and other appropriate decorations, suited to the tenor of the contents.

The third epistle was a complete contrast to the other two. It was written in a coarse, irregular, schoolboy half-text, which, however, seemed to have cost the writer as much pains as if it had been a specimen of the most exquisite calligraphy. And these were the contents:—

"SUR—Jack Moobray has betted with me that the samon you killed on Saturday last weyd ni to eiteen pounds.—I say nyer sixteen.—So you being a spurtsman, 'tis referr'd.—So hope you will come or send me't; do not doubt you will be on honour. The bet is a dozen of claret, to be drank at the hotel by our own sett, on Monday next; and we beg you will make one; and Moobray hopes you will come down.—Being, sir, your most humbel servant,—Bing Binks Baronet, and of Block-hall.

"*Postscript.*—Have sent some loops of Indian gout, also some black hakkels of my groom's dressing; hope they will prove killing as suiting river and season."

No answer was received to any of these invitations for more than three days; which, while it secretly rather added to than diminished the curiosity of the Wellers concerning the Unknown, occasioned much railing in public against him, as ill-mannered and rude.

Meantime, Francis Tyrrel, to his great surprise, began to find, like the philosophers, that he was never less alone than when alone. In the most silent and sequestered walks, to which the present state of his mind induced him to betake himself, he was sure to find some strollers from the Well, to whom he had become the object of so much solicitous interest. Quite innocent of the knowledge that he himself possessed the attraction which occasioned his meeting them so frequently, he began to doubt whether the Lady Penelope and her maidens—Mr Winterblossom and his grey pony—the parson and his short black coat and raven-grey pantaloons—were not either actual polygraphic copies of the same individuals, or possessed of a celerity of motion resembling omnipresence and ubiquity; for nowhere could he go without meeting them, and that oftener than once a-day, in the course of his walks. Sometimes the presence of the sweet Lycoris was intimated by the sweet prattle in an adjacent shade; sometimes, when Tyrrel thought himself most solitary, the parson's flute was heard snoring forth Gramachree Molly; and if he betook

himself to the river, he was pretty sure to find his sport watched by Sir Bingo or some of his friends.

The efforts which Tyrrel made to escape from this persecution, and the impatience of it which his manner indicated, procured him, among the Wellers, the name of the *Misanthrope*; and once distinguished as an object of curiosity, he was the person most attended to, who could, at the ordinary of the day, give the most accurate account of where the *Misanthrope* had been, and how occupied in the course of the morning. And so far was Tyrrel's shyness from diminishing the desire of the Wellers for his society, that the latter feeling increased with the difficulty of gratification,—as the angler feels the most peculiar interest when throwing his fly for the most cunning and considerate trout in the pool.

In short, such was the interest which the excited imaginations of the company took in the *Misanthrope*, that, notwithstanding the amiable qualities which the word expresses, there was only one person in the society who did not desire to see the specimen at their rooms, for the purpose of examining him closely and at leisure; and the ladies were particularly desirous to inquire whether he was actually a *Misanthrope*—whether he had been always a *Misanthrope*—what had induced him to become a *Misanthrope*—and whether there were no means of inducing him to cease to be a *Misanthrope*.

One individual only, as we have said, neither desired to see nor hear more of the supposed Timon of Cleikum, and that was Mr Cowbray of St Ronan's. Through the medium of that venerable character John Pirner, professed weaver and practical black-fisher of the Aultoun of St Ronan's, who usually attended Tyrrel, to show him the casts of the river, carry his bag, and so forth, the Squire had ascertained that the judgment of Sir Bingo regarding the distorted weight of the fish was more correct than his own. This incurred an immediate loss of honour, besides the payment of a heavy bill. And the consequences might be yet more serious; nothing short of the emancipation of Sir Bingo, who had hitherto been Mr Cowbray's convenient shadow and adherent, but who, if triumphant, confiding in his superiority of judgment upon so important a point, might either cut him altogether, or expect that, in future, the Squire, who had long seemed the planet of their set, should be content to revolve all around himself, Sir Bingo, in the capacity of a satellite.

The Squire, therefore, devoutly hoped that Tyrrel's restive disposition might continue, to prevent the decision of the bet, while, at the same time, he nourished a very reasonable degree of dislike to that stranger, who had been the indirect occasion of the unpleasant predicament in which he found himself, by not catching a salmon weighing a pound heavier. He therefore openly censured the peevishness of those who proposed taking farther notice of Tyrrel, and referred to the unanswered letters as a piece of impertinence which announced him to be no gentleman.

But though appearances were against him, and though he was in truth naturally inclined to solitude, and averse to the affectation and bustle of such a society, that part of Tyrrel's behaviour which indicated ill-breeding was easily accounted for, by his never having

received the letters which required an answer. Trotting Nelly whether unwilling to face her gossip, Meg Dods, without bringing back the drawing, or whether oblivious through the influence of the double dram with which she had been indulged at the Well, jumbled off with her cart to her beloved village of Scate-raw, from which she transmitted the letters by the first bare-legged gillie who travelled towards Aultoun of St Ronan's; so that at last, but after a long delay, they reached the Cleikum Inn and the hands of Mr Tyrrel.

The arrival of these documents explained some part of the oddity of behaviour which had surprised him in his neighbours of the Well, and as he saw they had got somehow an idea of his being a lion extraordinary, and was sensible that such is a character equally ridiculous and difficult to support, he hastened to write to Mr Winterblossom a card in the style of ordinary mortals. In this he stated the delay occasioned by miscarriage of the letter, and his regret on that account; expressed his intention of dining with the company at the Well on the succeeding day, while he regretted that other circumstances, as well as the state of his health and spirits would permit him this honour very unfrequently during his stay in the country, and begged no trouble might be taken about his accommodation at the Well, as he was perfectly satisfied with his present residence. A separate note to Sir Bingo said he was happy he could verify the weight of the fish, which he had noted in his diary ("D—n the fellow, does he keep a dairy?" said the Baronet), and though the result could only be particularly agreeable to one party, he should wish both winner and loser mirth with their wine;—he was sorry he was unable to promise himself the pleasure of participating in either. Enclosed was a signed note of the weight of the fish. Armed with this, Sir Bingo claimed his wine—triumphed in his judgment—swore louder and more articulately than ever he was known to utter any previous sounds, that this Tyrrel was a devilish honest fellow, and he trusted to be better acquainted with him while the crest-fallen Squire, privately cursing the stranger by all his gods, had no mode of silencing his companion but by allowing his loss, and fixing a day for discussing the bet.

In the public rooms the company examined even microscopically the response of the stranger to Mr Winterblossom, straining the ingenuity to discover, in the most ordinary expressions, a deep and esoteric meaning, expressive of something mysterious, and not meant to meet the eye. Mr Meiklewham, the writer, dwelt on the word *circumstances*, which he read with peculiar emphasis.

"Ah, poor lad!" he concluded, "I doubt he sits cheaper at Mr Dort's chimney-corner than he could do with the present company."

Doctor Quackleben, in the manner of a clergyman selecting a word from his text, as that which is particularly insisted upon repeated in an under-tone, the words, "*State of health?*"—umph—state of health?—Nothing acute—no one has been sent for—must be chronic—tending to gout, perhaps.—Or his shyness to society—light wild eye—irregular step—starting when met suddenly by a stranger, and turning abruptly and angrily away—Pray, Mr Winte

possum, let me have an order to look over the file of newspapers—very troublesome that restriction about consulting them.”

“You know it is a necessary one, Doctor,” said the president; because so few of the good company read anything else, that the newspapers would have been worn to pieces long since.”

“Well, well, let me have the order,” said the Doctor; “I remember nothing of a gentleman run away from his friends—I must look at the description.—I believe I have a strait-jacket somewhere about the dispensary.”

While this suggestion appalled the male part of the company, who did not much relish the approaching dinner in company with a gentleman whose situation seemed so precarious, some of the younger ladies whispered to each other—“Ah, poor fellow!—and if it be as the Doctor supposes, my lady, who knows what the cause of his illness may have been?—His *spirits* he complains of—ah, poor man!”

And thus, by the ingenious commentaries of the company at the well, on as plain a note as ever covered the eighth part of a sheet of foolscap, the writer was deprived of his property, his reason, and his heart, “all or either, or one or other of them,” as is briefly and distinctly expressed in the law phrase.

In short, so much was said *pro* and *con*, so many ideas started and theories maintained, concerning the disposition and character of the philanthrope, that, when the company assembled at the usual time, before proceeding to dinner, they doubted, as it seemed, whether the expected addition to their society was to enter the room on his hands and his feet; and when “Mr Tyrrel” was announced by Toby, at the sound of his voice, the gentleman who entered the room had so very little to distinguish him from others, that there was a momentary disappointment. The ladies, in particular, began to doubt whether the compound of talent, misanthropy, madness, and mental sensibility, which they had pictured to themselves, actually was the same with the genteel, and even fashionable-looking man whom they saw before them; who, though in a morning dress, which the distance of his residence, and the freedom of the place, made excusable, had, even in the minute points of his exterior, none of the negligence or coarseness which might be supposed to attach to the vestments of a philanthropic recluse, whether sane or insane. As he paid his compliments round the circle, the scales seemed to fall from the eyes of those he spoke to; and they saw with surprise, that the exaggerations had existed entirely in their own preconceptions, and that whatever the fortunes or rank in life of Mr Tyrrel might be, his manners, without being showy, were gentleman-like and pleasing. He returned his thanks to Mr Winterblossom in a manner which made that gentleman recall his best breeding to answer the stranger’s compliment in kind. He then escaped from the awkwardness of remaining the sole object of attention, by gliding gradually among the company,—not like an owl, which seeks to hide itself in a thicket, but like an awkward and retired man, shrinking from the society into which he is compelled, but with the air of one who could maintain at ease his part in a higher circle. His address to Lady Penelope

was adapted to the romantic tone of Mr Chatterly's epistle, to which it was necessary to allude. He was afraid, he said, he must complain to Juno of the neglect of Iris, for her irregularity in delivery of a certain ethereal command, which he had not dared to answer otherwise than by mute obedience—unless, indeed, as the import of the letter seemed to infer, the invitation was designed for some more gifted individual than he to whom chance had assigned it.

Lady Penelope by her lips, and many of the young ladies with their eyes, assured him there was no mistake in the matter; that he was really the gifted person whom the nymphs had summoned to their presence, and that they were well acquainted with his talents as a poet and a painter. Tyrrel disclaimed, with earnestness and gravity, the charge of poetry, and professed that, far from attempting the art itself, he "read with reluctance all but the productions of the very first-rate poets, and some of these—he was almost afraid to say—he should have liked better in humble prose."

"You have now only to disown your skill as an artist," said Lady Penelope, "and we must consider Mr Tyrrel as the falsest and most deceitful of his sex, who has a mind to deprive us of the opportunity of benefiting by the productions of his unparalleled endowments, I assure you I shall put my young friends on their guard. Such dissimulation cannot be without its object."

"And I," said Mr Winterblossom, "can produce a piece of real evidence against the culprit."

So saying, he unrolled the sketch which he had filched from Trotting Nelly, and which he had pared and pasted (arts in which he was eminent), so as to take out its creases, repair its breaches, and vamp it as well as my old friend Mrs Weir could have repaired the damage of time on a folio Shakespeare.

"The *vara corpus delicti*," said the writer, grinning and rubbing his hands.

"If you are so good as to call such scratches drawings," said Tyrrel, "I must stand so far confessed. I used to do them for my own amusement; but since my landlady, Mrs Dods, has of late discovered that I gain my livelihood by them, why should I disown it?"

This avowal, made without the least appearance either of sham or *retenue*, seemed to have a striking effect on the whole society. The president's trembling hand stole the sketch back to the portfolio, afraid doubtless it might be claimed in form, or else compensation expected by the artist. Lady Penelope was disconcerted, like an awkward horse when it changes the leading foot in galloping. She had recede from the respectful and easy footing on which he had contrived to place himself, to one which might express patronage on her own part and dependence on Tyrrel's; and this could not be done in a moment.

The Man of Law murmured, "Circumstances—circumstances—thought so!"

Sir Bingo whispered to his friend the Squire, "Run out—blow up—off the course—pity—d—d pretty fellow he has been!"

"A raff from the beginning!" whispered Mowbray.—"I never thought him anything else."

"I'll hold ye a poney of that, my dear, and I'll ask him."

Done, for a poney, provided you ask him in ten minutes," said Squire; "but you dare not, Bingie—he has a d—d cross-game with all that civil chaff of his."

Done," said Sir Bingo, but in a less confident tone than before, with a determination to proceed with some caution in the matter. I have got a rouleau above, and Winterblossom shall hold stakes." I have no rouleau," said the Squire; "but I'll fly a cheque on klewham."

See it be better than your last," said Sir Bingo, "for I won't be marked again.—Jack, my boy, you are had."

Not till the bet's won; and I shall see you walking dandy break your head, Bingie, before that," answered Mowbray.

Best speak to the Captain beforehand—it is a hellish scrape you are running into—I'll let you off yet, Bingie, for a guinea forfeit.—I am just going to start the tattler."

Start, and be d—d!" said Sir Bingo. "You are gotten, I assure you of that, Jack;" and with a bow and a shuffle, he went up and introduced himself to the stranger as Sir Bingo Binks.

Had—honour—write—sir," were the only sounds which his throat, rather than his cravat, seemed to send forth.

Confound the booby!" thought Mowbray; "he will get out of his fishing strings, if he goes on at this rate; and doubly confounded be the cursed tramper, who, the Lord knows why, has come hither from the Lord knows where, to drive the pigs through my game."

In the mean time, while his friend stood with his stop-watch in his hand, with a visage lengthened under the influence of these objections, Sir Bingo, with an instinctive tact, which self-preservation seemed to dictate to a brain, neither the most delicate nor subtle in the world, premised his inquiry with some general remarks on fishing and field-sports. With all these he found Tyrrel more than passably unimpaired. Of fishing and shooting, particularly, he spoke with something like enthusiasm; so that Sir Bingo began to hold him in considerable respect, and to assure himself that he could not be, or at least could not originally have been bred, the itinerant artist which he now gave himself out—and this, with the fast lapse of the time, induced him thus to address Tyrrel,—“I say, Mr Tyrrel—why, you have been one of us—I say——”

If you mean a sportsman, Sir Bingo—I have been, and am a pretty keen one still," replied Tyrrel.

Why, then, you did not always do them sort of things?"

What sort of things do you mean, Sir Bingo?" said Tyrrel—"I do not the pleasure of understanding you."

Why, I mean them sketches," said Sir Bingo. "I'll give you a handsome order for them if you tell me. I will, on my honour."

Does it concern you particularly, Sir Bingo, to know anything of these affairs?" said Tyrrel.

No—certainly—not immediately," answered Sir Bingo, with some hesitation; for he liked not the dry tone in which Tyrrel's answers were returned half so well as a bumper of dry sherry; "only I said you were a d—d gnostic fellow, and I laid a bet you have not been a professional—that's all."

Mr Tyrrel replied, "A bet with Mr Mowbray, I suppose?"

"Yes, with Jack," replied the Baronet—"you have hit it—I hope I have done him?"

Tyrrel bent his brows, and looked first at Mr Mowbray, then at the Baronet, and, after a moment's thought, addressed the latter:—"Sir Bingo Binks, you are a gentleman of elegant inquiry and acute judgment.—You are perfectly right—I was *not* bred to the profession of an artist, nor did I practise it formerly, whatever I may do now, and so that question is answered."

"And Jack is diddled," said the Baronet, smiting his thigh in triumph, and turning towards the Squire and the stakeholder with a smile of exultation.

"Stop a single moment, Sir Bingo," said Tyrrel; "take one word with you. I have a great respect for bets—it is part of an Englishman's charter to bet on what he thinks fit, and to prosecute his inquiries over hedge and ditch, as if he were steeple-hunting. But as I have satisfied you on the subject of two bets, that is sufficient compliance with the custom of the country; and therefore I request Sir Bingo, you will not make me or my affairs the subject of any more wagers."

"I'll be d—d if I do," was the internal resolution of Sir Bingo. Aloud he muttered some apologies, and was heartily glad that the dinner-bell, sounding at the moment, afforded him an apology for shuffling off in a different direction.

CHAPTER VI.

TABLE-TALK.

And, sir, if these accounts be true,
The Dutch have mighty things in view;
The Austrians—I admire French beans,
Dear ma'am, above all other greens.

* * *
And all as lively and as brisk
As—Ma'am, d'ye choose a game at whisk?
Table-Talk.

WHEN they were about to leave the room, Lady Penelope assumed Tyrrel's arm with a sweet smile of condescension, meant to make the honoured party understand in its full extent the favour conferred. But the unreasonable artist, far from intimating the least confusion at an attention so little to be expected, seemed to consider the distinction as one which was naturally paid to the greatest stranger present; and when he placed Lady Penelope at the head of the table, by Mr Winterblossom the president, and took a chair to himself betwixt her ladyship and Lady Binks, the provoking wretch appeared no more sensible of being exalted above his proper rank in society, than if he had been sitting at the bottom of the table. Honest Mrs Blower from the Bow-head, who had come to the W

carry off the dregs of the *Influenzie*, which she scorned to term a feat.

Now this indifference puzzled Lady Penelope's game extremely, irritated her desire to get at the bottom of Tyrrel's mystery, if there was one, and secure him to her own party. If you were ever a watering-place, reader, you know that while the guests do not always pay the most polite attention to unmarked individuals, the appearance of a stray lion makes an interest as strong as it is reasonable, and the Amazonian chiefs of each coterie, like the hunters of Senos-Ayres, prepare their *lasso*, and manœuvre to the best advantage they can, each hoping to noose the unsuspecting monster, and hold him captive to her own menagerie. A few words concerning Lady Penelope Penfeather will explain why she practised this sport with even more than common zeal.

She was the daughter of an earl, possessed a showy person, and features which might be called handsome in youth, though now rather too much *prononcés* to render the term proper. The nose had become sharper; the cheeks had lost the roundness of youth; but, as, during fifteen years that she had reigned a beauty and a long toast, the right man had not spoken, or, at least, had not spoken at the right time, her ladyship, now rendered sufficiently independent by the inheritance of an old relation, spoke in praise of friendship, began to dislike the town in summer, and to "babble of green fields."

About the time that Lady Penelope thus changed the tenor of her life, she was fortunate enough, with Dr Quackleben's assistance, to set out the virtues of St Ronan's spring; and, having contributed her share to establish the *Urbs in rure*, which had risen around it, she sat herself down as leader of the fashions in the little province which she had in a great measure both discovered and colonised. She was, therefore, justly desirous to compel homage and tribute from all who should approach the territory.

In other respects, Lady Penelope pretty much resembled the generous class she belonged to. She was at bottom a well-principled woman, but too thoughtless to let her principles control her humour, therefore not scrupulously nice in her society. She was good-natured, but capricious and whimsical, and willing enough to be kind and generous, if it neither thwarted her humour, nor cost her much trouble; would have chaperoned a young friend anywhere, and raved the world for subscription tickets; but never troubled herself very much her giddy charge flirted, or with whom; so that, with a generous class of Misses, her ladyship was the most delightful creature in the world. Then Lady Penelope had lived so much in society, knew so exactly when to speak, and how to escape from an embarrassing discussion by professing ignorance, while she looked intelligent, that she was not generally discovered to be a fool, unless when she set up for being remarkably clever. This happened more frequently of late, when perhaps, as she could not but observe that the repairs of the toilette became more necessary, she might suppose that new lights, according to the poet, were streaming on her mind through the chinks that Time was making. Many of her friends,

however, thought that Lady Penelope would have better consulted her genius by remaining in mediocrity, as a fashionable and well-bred woman, than by parading her new-founded pretensions to taste and patronage; but such was not her own opinion, and doubtless ladyship was the best judge.

On the other side of Tyrrel sat Lady Binks, lately the beautiful Miss Bonnyrigg, who, during the last season, had made the company at the Well alternately admire, smile, and stare, by dancing the latest Highland fling, riding the wildest pony, laughing the loudest laugh at the broadest joke, and wearing the briefest petticoat of a nymph of St Ronan's. Few knew that this wild, hoydenish, half-mad humour, was only superinduced over her real character, for the purpose of—getting well married. She had fixed her eyes on Sir Bingo and was aware of his maxim, that to catch him, “a girl must be, in his own phrase, “bang up to everything;” and that he would choose a wife for the neck-or-nothing qualities which recommend a game hunter. She made out her catch-match, and she was miserable. Her wild good-humour was entirely an assumed part of her character, which was passionate, ambitious, and thoughtful. Delicacy had none—she knew Sir Bingo was a brute and a fool, even while she was hunting him down; but she had so far mistaken her own feelings, as not to have expected that when she became bone of his bone, she should feel so much shame and anger when she saw him so folly expose him to be laughed at and plundered, or so disgusted when his brutality became intimately connected with herself. True, he was on the whole rather an innocent monster; and between biting and bridling, coaxing and humouring, might have been made to pad on well enough. But an unhappy boggling which had taken place previous to the declaration of their private marriage, had exasperated her spirits against her helpmate, that modes of conciliation were the last she was likely to adopt. Not only had the assistance of the Scottish Themis, so propitiously indulgent to the foibles of the fair, been resorted to on the occasion, but even Mars seemed ready to enter upon the tapis, if Hymen had not intervened. There was, *de par le monde*, a certain brother of the lady—an officer—and, as it happened, on leave of absence,—who alighted from his hack-chaise at the Fox Hotel at eleven o'clock at night, holding in his hand a slip of well-dried oak, accompanied by another gentleman who, like himself, wore a military travelling-cap and a black stock. Out of the said chaise, as was reported by the trusty Toby, he handed a small reise-sac, an Andrea Ferrara, and a neat mahogany box, eighteen inches long, three deep, and some six broad. Next morning a solemn *palaver* (as the natives of Madagascar call the national convention) was held at an unusual hour, at which Captain MacTurk and Mr Mowbray assisted; and the upshot was, that at breakfast the company were made happy by the information, that Sir Bingo had been for some weeks the happy bridegroom of the general favourite; which union, concealed for family reasons, he was now at liberty to acknowledge, and to fly with the wings of love to bring his sorrowing turtle from the shades to which she had retired till the obstacles to their mutual happiness could be removed. N

ugh all this sounded very smoothly, that gall-less turtle, Lady Binks, could never think of the tenor of the proceedings without the deepest feelings of resentment and contempt for the principal actor, Sir Bingo.

Besides all these unpleasant circumstances, Sir Bingo's family had used to countenance her wish that he should bring her to his own home; and hence a new shock to her pride, and new matter of contempt against poor Sir Bingo, for being ashamed and afraid to face even the opposition of his kinsfolk, for whose displeasure, though ever attending to any good advice from them, he retained a childish feeling.

The manners of the young lady were no less changed than was her temper; and, from being much too careless and free, were become reserved, sullen, and haughty. A consciousness that many scrupled to hold intercourse with her in society, rendered her disagreeably conscious of her rank, and jealous of everything that appeared like neglect. She had constituted herself mistress of Sir Bingo's purse; and, unrestrained in the expenses of dress and equipage, chose, contrary to her maiden practice, to be rather rich and splendid than plain, and to command that attention by magnificence which she no longer deigned to solicit by rendering herself either agreeable or entertaining. One secret source of her misery was the necessity of paying deference to Lady Penelope Penfeather, whose understanding she despised, and whose pretensions to consequence, to patronage, and to literature, she had acuteness enough to see through, and to condemn; and this dislike was the more grievous, that she felt she depended a good deal on Lady Penelope's countenance for the situation she was able to maintain, even among the not very select society of Saint Ronan's Well; and that, neglected by her, she must have dropped lower in the scale even there. Neither was Lady Penelope's goodness to Lady Binks extremely cordial. She partook in the ancient and ordinary dislike of single nymphs of a certain age, to those who make splendid alliances under their very eye—and she more than suspected the secret disaffection of the lady. But the same sounded well; and the style in which Lady Binks lived was a credit to the place. So they satisfied their mutual dislike with saying a few sharp things to each other occasionally, but all under the mask of civility.

Such was Lady Binks; and yet, being such, her dress, and her equipage, and carriages, were the envy of half the Misses at the Well, who, while she sat disfiguring with sullenness her very lovely face (for it was as beautiful as her shape was exquisite), only thought she was proud of having carried her point, and felt herself, with her large fortune and diamond bandeau, no fit company for the rest of the party. They gave way, therefore, with meekness to her domineering temper, though it was not the less tyrannical, that in her hidden state of hoydenhood she had been to some of them an object of slight and of censure; and Lady Binks had not forgotten the offences offered to Miss Bonnyrigg. But the fair sisterhood submitted to her retaliations, as lieutenants endure the bullying of a rude and boisterous captain of the sea, with the secret determination

to pay it home to their underlings when they shall become captains themselves.

In this state of importance, yet of penance, Lady Binks occupied her place at the dinner-table, alternately disconcerted by some stupid speech of her lord and master, and by some slight sarcasm from Lady Penelope, to which she longed to reply, but dared not.

She looked from time to time at her neighbour, Frank Tyrrel, but without addressing him, and accepted in silence the usual civilities which he proffered to her. She had remarked keenly his interview with Sir Bingo, and knowing by experience the manner in which he honoured lord was wont to retreat from a dispute in which he was unsuccessful, as well as his genius for getting into such perplexities, she had little doubt that he had sustained from the stranger some new indignity; whom, therefore, she regarded with a mixture of feeling, scarce knowing whether to be pleased with him for having given pain to him whom she hated, or angry with him for having affronted one in whose degradation her own was necessarily involved. There might be other thoughts—on the whole, she regarded him with much though with mute attention. He paid her but little in return, being almost entirely occupied in replying to the question of the engrossing Lady Penelope Penfeather.

Receiving polite though rather evasive answers to her inquiries concerning his late avocations, her ladyship could only learn that Tyrrel had been travelling in several remote parts of Europe, and even of Asia. Baffled, but not repulsed, the lady continued her courtesy, by pointing out to him, as a stranger, several individuals of the company to whom she proposed introducing him, as persons from whose society he might derive either profit or amusement. In the midst of this sort of conversation, however, she suddenly stopped short.

"Will you forgive me, Mr Tyrrel," she said, "if I say I have been watching your thoughts for some moments, and that I have detected you? All the while I have been talking of these good folks, and that you have been making such civil replies, that they might be, with great propriety and utility, inserted in the 'Familiar Dialogues' teaching foreigners how to express themselves in English upon ordinary occasions—your mind has been entirely fixed upon that empty chair, which hath remained there opposite betwixt our worthy president and Sir Bingo Binks."

"I own, madam," he answered, "I was a little surprised at seeing such a distinguished seat unoccupied, while the table is rather crowded."

"Oh, confess more, sir!—Confess that to a poet a seat unoccupied—the chair of Banquo—has more charms than if it were filled even as an alderman would fill it.—What if 'the Dark Ladye'¹ should glide in and occupy it?—Would you have courage to stand the vision, Mr Tyrrel?—I assure you the thing is not impossible."

"What is not impossible, Lady Penelope?" said Tyrrel, somewhat surprised.

"Startled already?—Nay, then, I despair of your enduring the awful interview."

¹ Note B. *The Dark Ladye.*

What interview! who is expected?" said Tyrrel, unable with utmost exertion to suppress some signs of curiosity, though unsuspecting the whole to be merely some mystification of her lady-

"How delighted I am," she said, "that I have found out where are vulnerable!—Expected—did I say expected?—no, not expected."

'She glides, like Night, from land to land,
She hath strange power of speech.'

"It will come, I have you at my mercy, and I will be generous and fair.—We call—that is, among ourselves, you understand—Miss Clara Mowbray, the sister of that gentleman that sits next to Miss Mowbray, the Dark Ladye, and that seat is left for her.—For she was expected—no, not expected—I forget again!—but it was thought probable she might honour us to-day, when our feast was so full and elegant.—Her brother is our Lord of the Manor—and so they pay that sort of civility to regard her as a visitor—and neither Lady Mowbray nor I think of objecting—She is a singular young person, Clara Mowbray—she amuses me very much—I am always rather anxious to see her."

"She is not to come hither to-day," said Tyrrel; "am I so to understand your ladyship?"

"Why, it is past her time—even *her* time," said Lady Penelope.—"My dinner was kept back half an hour, and our poor invalids were waiting, as you may see by the deeds they have done since.—But Clara is an odd creature, and if she took it into her head to come here at this moment, hither she would come—she is very whimsical. Many people think her handsome—but she looks so like something out of another world, that she makes me always think of Mat Lewis's Spectre Lady."

And she repeated with much cadence,

"There is a thing—there is a thing,
I fain would have from thee;
I fain would have that gay gold ring,
O warrior, give it me!"

And then you remember his answer:

'This ring Lord Brooke from his daughter took,
And a solemn oath he swore,
That that ladye my bride should be
When this crusade was o'er.'

"You do figures as well as landscapes, I suppose, Mr Tyrrel?—You will make a sketch for me—a slight thing—for sketches, I think, give the freedom of art better than finished pieces—I dote on the effusions of genius—flashing like lightning from the cloud!—You shall make a sketch for my own boudoir—my dear sulky den in Sir Castle, and Clara Mowbray shall sit for the Ghost Ladye." "That would be but a poor compliment to your ladyship's friend," replied Tyrrel.

"Friend? We don't get quite that length, though I like Clara very well.—Quite sentimental cast of face,—I think I saw an antique

in the Louvre very like her—(I was there in 1800)—quite an antique countenance—eyes something hollowed—care has dug caves for them, but they are caves of the most beautiful marble arched with jet—a straight nose, and absolutely the Grecian mouth and chin—a profusion of long straight black hair, with the whitest skin you ever saw—as white as the whitest parchment—and not a shade of colour in her cheek—none whatever—If she would be naughty, and borrow a prudent touch of complexion, she might be called beautiful. Even as it is, many think her so, although surely, Mr Tyrrel, three colours are necessary to the female face. However, we used to call her the Melpomene of the Spring last season, as we called Lady Binks—who was not then Lady Binks—our Euphrosyne—Did we not, my dear?”

“Did we not what, madam?” said Lady Binks, in a tone something sharper than ought to have belonged to so beautiful a countenance.

“I am sorry I have started you out of your reverie, my love,” answered Lady Penelope. “I was only assuring Mr Tyrrel that you were once Euphrosyne, though now so much under the banners of *Il Penseroso*.”

“I do not know that I have been either one or the other,” answered Lady Binks; “one thing I certainly am not—I am not capable of understanding your ladyship’s wit and learning.”

“Poor soul,” whispered Lady Penelope to Tyrrel; “we know what we are, we know not what we may be.—And now, Mr Tyrrel, I have been your sibyl to guide you through this Elysium of ours, I think in reward, I deserve a little confidence in return.”

“If I had any to bestow, which could be in the slightest degree interesting to your ladyship,” answered Tyrrel.

“Oh! cruel man—he will not understand me!” exclaimed the lady.—“In plain words, then, a peep into your portfolio—just to see what objects you have rescued from natural decay, and rendered immortal by the pencil. You do not know—indeed, Mr Tyrrel, you do not know how I dote upon your ‘serenely silent art,’ second to poetry alone—equal—superior perhaps—to music.”

“I really have little that could possibly be worth the attention of such a judge as your ladyship,” answered Tyrrel; “such trifles as your ladyship has seen I sometimes leave at the foot of the tree I have been sketching.”

“As Orlando left his verses in the forest of Ardennes?—Oh, the thoughtless prodigality!—Mr Winterblossom, do you hear this?—We must follow Mr Tyrrel in his walks, and glean what he leaves behind him.”

Her ladyship was here disconcerted by some laughter on Sir Bingo’s side of the table, which she chastised by an angry glance, and then proceeded emphatically:

“Mr Tyrrel—this must *not* be—this is not the way of the world, my good sir, to which even Genius must stoop its flight. We must consult the engraver—though perhaps you etch as well as you draw?”

“I should suppose so,” said Mr Winterblossom, edging in a word with difficulty, “from the freedom of Mr Tyrrel’s touch.”

“I will not deny my having spoiled a little copper now and then,”

Mr Tyrrel, "since I am charged with the crime by such good judges ; it has only been by way of experiment."

"Say no more," said the lady ; my darling wish is accomplished !—I have long desired to have the remarkable and most romantic spots of our little Arcadia here—spots consecrated to friendship, the arts, the loves and the graces, immortalised by the graver's art, and entrusted to its charge of fame—you shall labour on this task, Mr Tyrrel ; we will all assist with notes and illustrations—we will all contribute—only some of us must be permitted to remain anonymous. For fairy favours, you know, Mr Tyrrel, must be kept secret—And you will be allowed the pillage of the Album—some sweet things there of Mr Chatterly's—and Mr Edgeit, a gentleman of your own profession, I am sure will lend his aid—Dr Quackleben will contribute some scientific notices.—And for subscription——"

"Financial—financial—your leddyship, I speak to order !" said the writer, interrupting Lady Penelope with a tone of impudent familiarity, which was meant doubtless for jocular ease.

"How am I out of order, Mr Meiklewham ?" said her ladyship, drawing herself up.

"I speak to order !—No warrants for money can be extracted before intimation to the Committee of Management."

"Pray, who mentioned money, Mr Meiklewham ?" said her ladyship.—"That wretched old pettifogger," she added, in a whisper to Mr Tyrrel, "thinks of nothing else but the filthy pelf."

"Ye spake of subscription, my leddy, which is the same thing as money, differing only in respect of time—the subscription being a contract *de futuro*, and having a *tractus temporis in gremio*—And I have kend many honest folks in the company at the Well complain of the subscriptions as a great abuse, as obliging them either to look like other folk, or to gie good lawful coin for ballants and picture-books, and things they caredna a pinch of snuff for."

Several of the company, at the lower end of the table, assented with nods and murmurs of approbation ; and the orator was about to proceed, when Tyrrel with difficulty procured a hearing before the debate went farther, and assured the company that her ladyship's goodness had led her into an error ; that he had no work in hand worthy of their patronage, and, with the deepest gratitude for Lady Penelope's goodness, had it not in his power to comply with her request. There was some tittering at her ladyship's expense, who, the writer slyly observed, had been something *ultronious* in her patronage. Without attempting for the moment any rally (as indeed the time which had passed since the removal of the dinner scarcely permitted an opportunity), Lady Penelope gave the signal for the ladies' retreat, and left the gentlemen to the circulation of the bottle.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TEA-TABLE.

—While the cups,
Which cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each.
COWPER.

It was common at the Well for the fair guests occasionally to give tea to the company,—such at least as, from their rank and leading in the little society, might be esteemed fit to constitute themselves patronesses of an evening; and the same lady generally carried the authority she had acquired into the ball-room, where two fiddles and a bass, at a guinea a night, with a *quantum sufficit* of tallow candles (against the use of which Lady Penelope often mutinied), enabled the company—to use the appropriate phrase—“to close the evening on the light fantastic toe.”

On the present occasion the lion of the hour, Mr Francis Tyrrel, had so little answered the high-wrought expectations of Lady Penelope, that she rather regretted having ever given herself any trouble about him, and particularly that of having manœuvred herself into the patronage of the tea-table for the evening, to the great expenditure of souchong and congo. Accordingly, her ladyship had no sooner summoned her own woman, and her *fille de chambre*, to make tea, with her page, footman, and postilion, to hand it about (in which duty they were assisted by two richly-laced and thickly powdered footmen of Lady Binks's, whose liveries put to shame the more modest garb of Lady Penelope's, and even dimmed the glory of the suppressed coronet upon the buttons), than she began to vilipend and depreciate what had been so long the object of her curiosity.

“This Mr Tyrrel,” she said, in a tone of authoritative decision, “seems after all a very ordinary sort of person—quite a commonplace man, who, she dared say, had considered his condition, in going to the old ale-house, much better than they had done for him, when they asked him to the Public Rooms. He had known his own place better than they did—there was nothing uncommon in his appearance or conversation—nothing at all *frappant*—she scarce believed he could even draw that sketch. Mr Winterblossom, indeed, made a great deal of it; but then all the world knew that every scrap of engraving or drawing, which Mr Winterblossom contrived to make his own, was, the instant it came into his collection, the finest thing that ever was seen—that was the way with collectors—their geese were all swans.”

“And your ladyship's swan has proved but a goose, my dearest lady Pen,” said Lady Binks.

“My swan, dearest Lady Binks! I really do not know how I have deserved the appropriation.”

“Do not be angry, my dear Lady Penelope; I only mean, that for

fortnight and more you have spoke constantly of this Mr Tyrrel, and all dinner-time you spoke to him."

The fair company began to collect around, at hearing the word *war* so often repeated in the same brief dialogue, which induced them to expect sport, and, like the vulgar on a similar occasion, to form a ring for the expected combatants.

"He sat betwixt us, Lady Binks," answered Lady Penelope, with gravity. "You had your usual headache, you know, and, for the credit of the company, I spoke for one."

"For *two*, if your ladyship pleases," replied Lady Binks. "I mean," she added, softening the expression, "for yourself and me."

"I am sorry," said Lady Penelope, "I should have spoken for one who can speak so smartly for herself, as my dear Lady Binks—I did not, by any means, desire to engross the conversation—I repeat it, there is a mistake about this man."

"I think there is," said Lady Binks, in a tone which implied something more than mere assent to Lady Penelope's proposition.

"I doubt if he is an artist at all," said the Lady Penelope; "or if he is, he must be doing things for some Magazine, or Encyclopædia, or some such matter."

"I doubt, too, if he be a professional artist," said Lady Binks. "If so, he is of the very highest class, for I have seldom seen a better-bred man."

"There are very well-bred artists," said Lady Penelope. "It is the profession of a gentleman."

"Certainly," answered Lady Binks; "but the poorer class have been to struggle with poverty and dependence. In general society they are like commercial people in presence of their customers; and that is a difficult part to sustain. And so you see them of all sorts shy and reserved, when they are conscious of merit—petulant and whimsical, by way of showing their independence—intrusive, in order to appear easy—and sometimes obsequious and fawning, when they chance to be of a mean spirit. But you seldom see them quite at their ease, and therefore I hold this Mr Tyrrel to be either an artist of the first class, raised completely above the necessity and degradation of patronage, or else to be no professional artist at all."

Lady Penelope looked at Lady Binks with much such a regard as Glaucias may have cast upon his ass, when he discovered the animal's incapacity for holding an argument with him. She muttered to herself—

"Mon ane parle, et même il parle bien !"

On declining the altercation which Lady Binks seemed disposed to enter into, she replied with good humour, "Well, dearest Rachel, we will not pull caps about this man—nay, I think your good opinion of him gives him new value in my eyes. That is always the way with us, my good friend! We may confess, it, when there are none of these conceited male wretches among us. We will know what he really is—he shall not wear fern-seed and walk among us invisible wretches—what say you, Maria?"

"Indeed, I say, dear Lady Penelope," answered Miss Digges, whose

ready chatter we have already introduced to the reader, "he is a very handsome man, though his nose is too big, and his mouth too wide—but his teeth are like pearl—and he has such eyes!—especially when your ladyship spoke to him. I don't think you looked at his eyes—they are quiet, deep, and dark, and full of glow, like what you read to us in the letter from that lady, about Robert Burns."

"Upon my word, miss, you come on finely," said Lady Penelope—"One had need take care what they read or talk about before you, I see—Come, Jones, have mercy upon us—put an end to that symphony of tinkling cups and saucers, and let the first act of the tea-table begin, if you please."

"Does her leddyship mean the grace?" said honest Mrs Blower, for the first time admitted into this worshipful society, and busily employed in arranging an Indian handkerchief, that might have made a mainsail for one of her husband's smuggling luggers, which she spread carefully on her knee, to prevent damage to a flowered black silk gown from the repast of tea and cake, to which she proposed to do due honour—"Does her leddyship mean the grace? I see the minister is just coming in. Her leddyship waits till ye say a blessing, an ye please, sir."

Mr Winterblossom, who *toddled* after the chaplain, his toe having given him an alert hint to quit the dining-table, though he saw every feature in the poor woman's face swoln with desire to procure information concerning the ways and customs of the place, passed on the other side of the way, regardless of her agony of curiosity.

A moment after she was relieved by the entrance of Dr Quackleben, whose maxim being, that one patient was as well worth attention as another, and who knew by experience that the *honoraria* of a godly wife of the Bow-head were as apt to be forthcoming (if not more so), as my Lady Penelope's, he e'en sat himself quietly down by Mrs Blower, and proceeded with the utmost kindness to inquire after her health, and to hope she had not forgotten taking a table-spoonful of spirits burnt to a *residuum*, in order to qualify the crudities.

"Indeed, Doctor," said the honest woman, "I loot the brandy burr as lang as I dought look' at the gude creature wasting its sell that gate—and then, when I was fain to put it out for very thrift, I did take a thimbleful of it (although it is not the thing I am used to, Dr Quackleben), and I winna say but that it did me good."

"Unquestionably, madam," said the Doctor. "I am no friend to the use of alcohol in general, but there are particular cases—there are particular cases, Mrs Blower—My venerated instructor, one of the greatest men in our profession that ever lived, took a wine-glassful of old rum, mixed with sugar, every day after his dinner."

"Ay? dear heart, he would be a comfortable doctor that," said Mr Blower. "He wad maybe ken something of my case. Is he living think ye, sir?"

"Dead for many years, madam," said Dr Quackleben; "and there are but few of his pupils that can fill his place, I assure ye. If could be thought an exception, it is only because I was a favourite. Ah! blessings on the old red cloak of him!—It covered more of the healing science than the gowns of a whole modern university."

"There is ane, sir," said Mrs Blower, "that has been muckle recommended about Edinburgh—Macgregor, I think they ca' him—alk come far and near to see him."¹

"I know whom you mean, ma'am—a clever man—no denying it—clever man—but there are certain cases—yours, for example—and think that of many that come to drink this water—which I cannot say I think he perfectly understands—hasty—very hasty and rapid. Now I—I give the disease its own way at first—then watch it, Mrs Blower—watch the turn of the tide."

"Ay, troth, that's true," responded the widow; "John Blower was re watching turn of tide, puir man."

"Then he is a starving Doctor, Mrs Blower—reduces diseases as soldiers do towns—by famine, not considering that the friendly inhabitants suffer as much as the hostile garrison—ahem!"

Here he gave an important and emphatic cough, and then proceeded:

"I am no friend either to excess or to violent stimulus, Mrs Blower—but nature must be supported—a generous diet—cordials judiciously thrown in—not without the advice of a medical man—that is my opinion, Mrs Blower, to speak as a friend—others may starve their patients if they have a mind."

"It wadna do for me, the starving, Dr Keekerben," said the armed relict,— "it wadna do for me at a'—Just a' I can do to wear rough the day with the sma' supports that nature requires—not at all to look after me, Doctor, since John Blower was ta'en awa.—Thank ye kindly, sir" (to the servant who handed the tea),—"thank ye, my bonny man" (to the page who served the cake)—"Now, my ladyship, think, Doctor" (in a low and confidential voice), "that her ladyship's tea is rather of the weakliest—water-bewitched, I think—and Mrs Jones, as they ca' her, has cut the seed-cake very thin?"

"It is the fashion, Mrs Blower," answered Dr Quackleben; "and her ladyship's tea is excellent. But your taste is a little chilled, which is not uncommon at the first use of the waters, so that you are not sensible of the flavour—we must support the system—reinforce the digestive powers—give me leave—you are a stranger, Mrs Blower, and we must take care of you—I have an elixir which will put that matter to rights in a moment."

So saying, Dr Quackleben pulled from his pocket a small portable case of medicines—"Catch me without my tools," he said; "here I have the real useful pharmacopeia—the rest is all humbug and hard names—this little case, with a fortnight or month, spring and fall, at St Ronan's Well, and no one will die till his day come."

Thus boasting, the Doctor drew from his case a large phial or small flask, full of a high-coloured liquid, of which he mixed three tea-spoonfuls in Mrs Blower's cup, who immediately afterwards allowed that the flavour was improved beyond all belief, and that it was "vera comfortable and restorative indeed."

"Will it not do good to my complaints, Doctor?" said Mr Winter-

¹ The late Dr Gregory is probably intimated, as one of the celebrated Dr Cullen's personal habits is previously mentioned. Dr Gregory was distinguished for putting his patients on a severe regimen.

blossom," who had strolled towards them, and held out his cup to the physician.

"I by no means recommend it, Mr Winterblossom, said Dr Quackleben, shutting up his case with great coolness; "your case is œdomatous, and you treat it your own way—you are as good a physician as I am, and I never interfere with another practitioner's patient."

"Well, Doctor," said Winterblossom, "I must wait till Sir Bingo comes in—he has a hunting-flask usually about him, which contains as good medicine as yours to the full."

"You will wait for Sir Bingo some time," said the Doctor, "he is a gentleman of sedentary habits—he has ordered another magnum."

"Sir Bingo is an unco name for a man o' quality; dinna ye think sae, Dr Cocklehen?" said Mrs Blower. "John Blower, when he was a wee bit in the wind's eye, as he ca'd it, puir fallow—used to sing a sang about a dog they ca'd Bingo, that suld hae belanged to a farmer."

"Our Bingo is but a puppy yet, madam—or, if a dog, he is a sad dog," said Mr Winterblossom, applauding his own wit by one of his own inimitable smiles.

"Or a mad dog, rather," said Mr Chatterly, "for he drinks no water;" and he also smiled gracefully at the thoughts of having trumped, as it were, the president's pun.

"Twa pleasant men, Doctor," said the widow, "and so is Sir Bungy too, for that matter; but oh! is nae it a pity he should bide sae lang by the bottle? It was puir John Blower's faut too, that weary tipping; when he wan to the lee-side of a bowl of punch there was nae raising him.—But they are taking awa the things, and, Doctor, is it not an awfu' thing that the creature comforts should hae been used without grace or thanksgiving?—that Mr Chitterling, if he really be a minister, has muckle to answer for, that he neglects his Master's service."

"Why, madam," said the Doctor, "Mr Chatterly is scarce arrived at the rank of a minister plenipotentiary."

"A minister potentiary—ah, Doctor, I doubt that is some jest of yours," said the widow; "that's sae like puir John Blower. When I wad hae had him gie up the Lovely Peggy, ship and cargo (the vessel was named after me, Doctor Kittleben), to be remembered in the prayers o' the congregation, he wad say to me, 'they may pray that stand the risk, Peggy Bryce, for I've made insurance.' He was a merry man, Doctor; but he had the root of the matter in him, for a' his light way of speaking, as deep as ony skipper that ever loosed anchor from Leith Roads. I hae been a forsaken creature since his death—Oh the weary days and nights that I have had!—and the weight on the spirits—the spirits, Doctor!—though I canna say I hae been easier since I hae been at the Wall than even now—if I kend what I was awing ye for elickstir, Doctor, for it's done me muckle heart's good, forby the opening of my mind to you?"

"Fie, fie, ma'am," said the Doctor, as the widow pulled out a seal-skin pouch, such as sailors carry tobacco in, but apparently well stuffed with bank-notes,—“Fie, fie, madam—I am no apothecary—I have my diploma from Leyden—a regular physician, madam,—the elixir is heartily at your service; and should you want any advice, no man will be prouder to assist you than your humble servant.”

"I am sure I am muckle obliged to your kindness, Dr Kickalpin," said the widow, folding up her pouch; "this was puir John Blower's *boleuchan*,¹ as they ca' it—I e'en wear it for his sake. He was a kind man, and left me comfortable in warld's gudes; but comforts are their cumpers,—to be a lone woman is a sair weird, Dr Kittlepin."

Dr Quackleben drew his chair a little nearer that of the widow, and entered into a closer communication with her, in a tone doubtless of more delicate consolation than was fit for the ears of the company at large.

One of the chief delights of a watering-place is, that every one's affairs seem to be put under the special surveillance of the whole company, so that, in all probability, the various flirtations, *liaisons*, and so forth, which naturally take place in the society, are not only the subject of amusement to the parties engaged, but also to the lookers on; that is to say, generally speaking, to the whole community of which for the time the said parties are members. Lady Penelope, the presiding goddess of the region, watchful over all her circle, was not long of observing that the Doctor seemed to be suddenly engaged in close communication with the widow, and that he had even ventured to take hold of her fair plump hand, with a manner which partook at once of the gallant suitor, and of the medical adviser.

"For the love of Heaven," said her ladyship, "who can that comely dame be, on whom our excellent and learned Doctor looks with such uncommon regard?"

"Fat, fair, and forty," said Mr Winterblossom; "that is all I know of her—a mercantile person."

"A Carrack, Sir President," said the chaplain, "richly laden with colonial produce, by name the Lovely Peggy Bryce—no master—the late John Blower of North Leith having pushed off his boat for the Stygian Creek, and left the vessel without a hand on board."

"The Doctor," said Lady Penelope, turning her glass towards them, "seems willing to play the part of pilot."

"I daresay he will be willing to change her name and register," said Mr Chatterly.

"He can be no less in common requital," said Winterblossom. "She has changed *his* name six times in the five minutes that I stood within hearing of them."

"What do you think of the matter, my dear Lady Binks?" said Lady Penelope.

"Madam?" said Lady Binks, starting from a reverie, and answering as one who either had not heard; or did not understand the question.

"I mean, what think you of what is going on yonder?"

Lady Binks turned her glass in the direction of Lady Penelope's glance, fixed the widow and the Doctor with one bold fashionable stare, and then dropping her hand slowly, said with indifference, "I really see nothing there worth thinking about."

"I daresay it is a fine thing to be married," said Lady Penelope; "one's thoughts, I suppose, are so much engrossed with one's own perfect happiness, that they have neither time nor inclination to

¹ A fur pouch for keeping tobacco.

laugh like other folks. Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg would have laughed till her eyes ran over, had she seen what Lady Binks cares so little about—I daresay it must be an all-sufficient happiness to be married."

"He would be a happy man that could convince your ladyship of that in good earnest," said Mr Winterblossom.

"Oh, who knows—the whim may strike me," replied the lady, "but no—no—no;—and that is three times."

"Say it sixteen times more," said the gallant president, "and let nineteen nay-says be a grant."

"If I should say a thousand Noes, there exists not the alchymy in living man that could extract one Yes out of the whole mass," said her ladyship. "Blessed be the memory of Queen Bess!—She set us all an example to keep power when we have it—What noise is that?"

"Only the usual after-dinner quarrel," said the divine. "I hear the Captain's voice, else most silent, commanding them to keep peace in the devil's name and that of the ladies."

"Upon my word, dearest Lady Binks, this is too bad of that lord and master of yours, and of Mowbray, who might have more sense and of the rest of that claret-drinking set, to be quarrelling and alarming our nerves every evening with presenting their pistols perpetually at each other, like sportsman confined to the house upon a rainy 12th of August. I am tired of the Peace-maker—he but skin the business over in one case to have it break out elsewhere.—What think you, love, if we were to give out in orders, that the next quarrel which may arise shall be *bonâ fide* fought to an end?—We will all go out and see it, and wear the colours on each side; and if there should a funeral come of it we will attend it in a body.—Weeds are so becoming!—Are they not, my dear Lady Binks? Look at Widow Blower in her deep black—don't you envy her, my love?"

Lady Binks seemed about to make a sharp and hasty answer, but checked herself, perhaps under the recollection that she could not prudently come to an open breach with Lady Penelope.—At the same moment a door opened, and a lady dressed in a riding-habit and wearing a black veil over her hat, appeared at the entry of the apartment.

"Angels and ministers of grace!" exclaimed Lady Penelope, with her very best tragic start—"My dearest Clara, why so late? and why thus? Will you step to my dressing-room—Jones will get you one of my gowns—we are just of a size, you know—do, pray—let me be vain of something of my own for once, by seeing you wear it."

This was spoken in the tone of the fondest female friendship, and at the same time the fair hostess bestowed on Miss Mowbray one of those tender caresses, which ladies—God bless them!—sometime bestow on each other with unnecessary prodigality, to the great discontent and envy of the male spectators.

"You are fluttered, my dearest Clara—you are feverish—I am sure you are," continued the sweetly anxious Lady Penelope; "let me persuade you to lie down."

"Indeed you are mistaken, Lady Penelope," said Miss Mowbray who seemed to receive much as a matter of course her ladyship's profusion of affectionate politeness:—"I am heated, and my pony trotte

ard, that is the whole mystery.—Let me have a cup of tea, Mrs Jones, and the matter is ended.”

“Fresh tea, Jones, directly,” said Lady Penelope, and led her passive friend to her own corner, as she was pleased to call the recess, in which she held her little court—ladies and gentlemen, curtsying and bowing as she passed; to which civilities the new guest made no more return than the most ordinary politeness rendered unavoidable. Lady Binks did not rise to receive her, but sat upright in her chair, and bent her head very stiffly; a courtesy which Miss Mowbray returned in the same stately manner, without farther greeting on either side.

“Now, wha can that be, Doctor?” said the Widow Blower—“mind we have promised to tell me all about the grand folk—wha can that be that Leddy Penelope hauds such a racket wi’?—and what for does she come wi’ a habit and a beaver-hat, when we are a’ (a glance at her own gown) in our silks and satins?”

“To tell you who she is, my dear Mrs Blower, is very easy,” said the officious Doctor. “She is Miss Clara Mowbray, sister to the Lord of the Manor—the gentleman who wears the green coat, with an arrow on the cape. To tell why she wears that habit, or does anything else, would be rather beyond doctor’s skill. Truth is, I have always thought she was a little—a very little—touched—call it nerves—hypochondria—or what you will.”

“Lord help us, puir thing!” said the compassionate widow.—“And troth it looks like it. But it’s a shame to let her go loose, Doctor—she might hurt hersell, or somebody. See, she has ta’en the knife!—Oh, it’s only to cut a shave of the diet-loaf. She winna let the powder-monkey of a boy help her. There’s judgment in that though, Doctor, for she can cut thick or thin as she likes.—Dear me! she has not taken mair than a crumb, that ane would pit between the wires of a canary-bird’s cage, after all.—I wish she would lift up that lang veil, or put aff that riding skirt, Doctor. She should really have showed the regulations, Doctor Kickelshin.”

“She cares about no rules we can make, Mrs Blower,” said the Doctor; “and her brother’s will and pleasure, and Lady Penelope’s whim of indulging her, carry her through in everything. They should take advice on her case.”

“Ay, truly, it’s time to take advice, when young creatures like her appear in amang dressed leddies, just as if they were come from campering on Leith sands.—Such a wark as my leddy makes wi’ her Doctor! Ye would think they were baith fools of a feather.”

“They might have flown on one wing, for what I know,” said Dr Quackleben; “but there was early and sound advice taken in Lady Penelope’s case. My friend, the late Earl of Featherhead, was a man of judgment—did little in his family but by rule of medicine—so that, what with the waters, and what with my own care, Lady Penelope is only freakish—fanciful—that’s all—and her quality bears it out—the peccant principle might have broken out under other treatment.”

“Ay—she has been well-friended,” said the widow; “but this bairn Mowbray, puir thing! how came she to be sae left to hersell?”

“Her mother was dead—her father thought of nothing but his

sports," said the Doctor. "Her brother was educated in England and cared for nobody but himself, if he had been here. What education she got was at her own hand—what reading she read was in a library full of old romances—what friends or company she had was what chance sent her—then no family-physician, not even a good surgeon within ten miles! And so you cannot wonder if the poor thing became unsettled."

"Puir thing!—no doctor!—nor even a surgeon!—But, Doctor," said the widow, "maybe the puir thing had the enjoyment of her health ye ken, and then——"

"Ah? ha, ha!—why *then*, madam, she needed a physician far more than if she had been delicate; a skilful physician, Mrs Blower knows how to bring down that robust health, which is a very alarming state of the frame when it is considered *secundum artem*. Most sudden deaths happen when people are in a robust state of health. Ah! that state of perfect health is what the doctor dreads most on behalf of his patient."

"Ay, ay, Doctor!—I am quite sensible, nae doubt," said the widow "of the great advantage of having a skeelfu' person about ane."

Here the Doctor's voice, in his earnestness to convince Mrs Blower of the danger of supposing herself capable of living and breathing without a medical man's permission, sunk into a soft pleading tone of which our reporter could not catch the sound. He was, as great orators will sometimes be, "inaudible in the gallery."

Meanwhile Lady Penelope overwhelmed Clara Mowbray with her caresses. In what degree her ladyship, at her heart, loved this young person, might be difficult to ascertain,—probably in the degree in which a child loves a favourite toy. But Clara was a toy not always to be come by—as whimsical in her way as her ladyship in her own, only that poor Clara's singularities were real, and her ladyship's chiefly affected. Without adopting the harshness of the Doctor's conclusions concerning the former, she was certainly unequal in her spirits; and her occasional fits of levity were chequered by very long intervals of sadness. Her levity also appeared, in the world's eye, greater than it really was; for she had never been under the restraint of society which was really good, and entertained an undue contempt for that which she sometimes mingled with; having unhappily none to teach her the important truth, that some forms and restraints are to be observed, less in respect to others than to ourselves. Her dress, her manners, and her ideas, were therefore very much her own; and though they became her wonderfully, yet like Ophelia's garlands, and wild snatches of melody, they were calculated to excite compassion and melancholy, even while they amused the observer.

"And why came you not to dinner?—We expected you—your throne was prepared."

"I had scarce come to tea," said Miss Mowbray, "of my own free will. But my brother says your ladyship proposes to come to Shaws-Castle, and he insisted it was quite right and necessary, to confirm you in so flattering a purpose, that I should come and say, Pray do, Lady Penelope; and so now here am I to say, Pray, do come."

"Is an invitation so flattering limited to me alone, my dear Clara?—Lady Binks will be jealous."

"Bring Lady Binks, if she has the condescension to honour us"—a bow was very stiffly exchanged between the ladies—"bring Mr Springblossom—Winterblossom—and all the lions and lionesses—we have room for the whole collection. My brother, I suppose, will bring his own particular regiment of bears, which, with the usual assortment of monkeys seen in all caravans, will complete the menagerie. How you are to be entertained at Shaws-Castle, is, I thank heaven, not my business, but John's."

"We shall want no formal entertainment, my love," said Lady Penelope; "a *déjeuner à la fourchette*—we know, Clara, you would be of doing the honours of a formal dinner."

"Not a bit; I should live long enough to make my will, and bequeath all large parties to Old Nick, who invented them."

"Miss Mowbray," said Lady Binks, who had been thwarted by this free-spoken young lady, both in her former character of a coquette and romp, and in that of a prude which she at present wore—"Miss Mowbray declares for

'Champagne and a chicken at last.'

"The chicken, without the champagne, if you please," said Miss Mowbray; "I have known ladies pay dear to have champagne on the board.—By-the-by, Lady Penelope, you have not your collection in the same order and discipline as Pidcock and Polito. There was much growling and snarling in the lower den when I passed it."

"It was feeding time, my love," said Lady Penelope; "and the lower animals of every class become pugnacious at that hour—you see all our safer and well-conditioned animals are loose, and in good order."

"Oh, yes—in the keeper's presence, you know—Well, I must venture to cross the hall again among all that growling and grumbling—I would I had the fairy prince's quarters of mutton to toss among them if they should break out—He, I mean, who fetched water from the Fountain of Lions. However, on second thoughts, I will take the back way, and avoid them.—What says honest Bottom?"

'For if they should as lions come in strife
Into such place, 'twere pity of their life.'

"Shall I go with you, my dear?" said Lady Penelope.

"No—I have too great a soul for that—I think some of them are lions only as far as the hide is concerned."

"But why would you go so soon, Clara?"

"Because my errand is finished—have I not invited you and yours? and would not Lord Chesterfield himself allow I have done the polite thing?"

"But you have spoken to none of the company—how can you be so odd, my love?" said her ladyship.

"Why, I spoke to them all when I spoke to you and Lady Binks—but I am a good girl, and will do as I am bid."

So saying, she looked round the company, and addressed each of them with an affectation of interest and politeness, which thinly concealed scorn and contempt.

"Mr Winterblossom, I hope the gout is better—Mr Robert Ryma—(I have escaped calling him Thomas for once)—I hope the public give encouragement to the muses—Mr Keelavine, I trust your pencil is busy—Mr Chatterly, I have no doubt your flock improves—Dr Quackleben, I am sure your patients recover.—These are all the especials of the worthy company I know—for the rest, health to the sick, and pleasure to the healthy."

"You are not going in reality, my love?" said Lady Penelope "these hasty rides agitate your nerves—they do, indeed—you should be cautious—Shall I speak to Quackleben?"

"To neither quack nor quackle, on my account, my dear lady. It is not as you would seem to say, by your winking at Lady Binks—it is not, indeed—I shall be no Lady Clementina, to be the wonder and pity of the spring of St Ronan's—No Ophelia neither—though I will say with her, Good-night, ladies—Good-night, sweet ladies!—and now—not my coach, my coach—but my horse, my horse!"

So saying, she tripped out of the room by a side passage, leaving the ladies looking at each other significantly, and shaking their heads with an expression of much import.

Something has ruffled the poor unhappy girl," said Lady Penelope; "I never saw her so very odd before."

"Were I to speak my mind," said Lady Binks, "I think, as Mrs Highmore says in the farce, her madness is but a poor excuse for her impertinence."

"Oh fie! my sweet Lady Binks," said Lady Penelope, "spare my poor favourite! You, surely, of all others, should forgive the excesses of an amiable eccentricity of temper.—Forgive me, my love, but I must defend an absent friend—My Lady Binks, I am very sure, is too generous and candid to

'Hate for arts which caused herself to rise.'

"Not being conscious of any high elevation, my lady," answered Lady Binks, "I do not know any arts I have been under the necessity of practising to attain it. I suppose a Scotch lady of an ancient family may become the wife of an English baronet, and no very extraordinary great cause to wonder at it."

"No, surely—but people in this world will, you know, wonder at nothing," answered Lady Penelope.

"If you envy me my poor quiz, Sir Bingo, I'll get you a better, Lady Pen."

"I don't doubt your talents, my dear, but when I want one, I will get one for myself.—But here comes the whole party of quizzes.—Joliffe, offer the gentlemen tea—then get the floor ready for the dancers, and set the card-tables in the next room."

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER DINNER.

They draw the cork, they broach the barrel,
And first they kiss, and then they quarrel.

PRIOR.

IF the reader has attended much to the manners of the canine race, he may have remarked the very different manner in which the individuals of the different sexes carry on their quarrels among each other. The females are testy, petulant, and very apt to indulge their impatient dislike of each other's presence, or the spirit of rivalry which it produces, in a sudden bark and snap, which last is generally made as much at advantage as possible. But these ebullitions of peevishness lead to no very serious or prosecuted conflict; the affair begins and ends in a moment. Not so the ire of the male dogs, which, once produced, and excited by growls of mutual offence and defiance, leads generally to a fierce and obstinate contest; in which, if the parties be dogs of game, and well matched, they grapple, throttle, roll each other in the kennel, and can only be separated by choking them with their own collars, till they lose wind and hold at the same time, or by surprising them out of their wrath by sousing them with cold water.

The simile, though a currish one, will hold good in its application to the human race. While the ladies in the tea-room of the Fox Hotel were engaged in the light snappish velitation, or skirmish, which we have described, the gentlemen who remained in the parlour were more than once like to have quarrelled more seriously.

We have mentioned the weighty reasons which induced Mr Mowbray to look upon the stranger, whom a general invitation had brought into their society, with unfavourable prepossessions; and these were far from being abated by the demeanour of Tyrrel, which, though perfectly well-bred, indicated a sense of equality, which the young Laird of St Ronan's considered as extremely presumptuous.

As for Sir Bingo, he already began to nourish the genuine hatred always entertained by a mean spirit against an antagonist before whom it is conscious of having made a dishonourable retreat. He forgot not the manner, look, and tone, with which Tyrrel had checked his unauthorised intrusion; and though he had sunk beneath it at the moment, the recollection rankled in his heart as an affront to be avenged. As he drank his wine, courage, the want of which was, in his more sober moments, a check upon his bad temper, began to inflame his malignity, and he ventured upon several occasions to show his spleen, by contradicting Tyrrel more flatly than good manners permitted upon so short an acquaintance, and without any provocation. Tyrrel saw his ill-humour, and despised it, as that of an overgrown schoolboy, whom it was not worth his while to answer according to his folly.

One of the apparent causes of the Baronet's rudeness was indeed childish enough. The company were talking of shooting, the most animating topic of conversation among Scottish country gentlemen of the younger class, and Tyrrel had mentioned something of a favourite setter, an uncommonly handsome dog, from which he had been for some time separated, but which he expected would rejoin him in the course of next week.

"A setter!" retorted Sir Bingo, with a sneer; "a pointer I suppose you mean!"

"No, sir," said Tyrrel; "I am perfectly aware of the difference betwixt a setter and a pointer, and I know the old-fashioned setter is become unfashionable among modern sportsmen. But I love my dog as a companion, as well as for his merits in the field; and a setter is more sagacious, more attached, and fitter for his place on the hearthrug than a pointer—not," he added, "from any deficiency of intellects on the pointer's part, but he is generally so abused while in the management of brutal breakers and grooms, that he loses all excepting his professional accomplishments, of finding and standing steady to game."

"And who the d—l desires he should have more?" said Sir Bingo.

"Many people, Sir Bingo," replied Tyrrel, "have been of opinion, that both dogs and men may follow sport indifferently well, though they do happen, at the same time, to be fit for mixing in friendly intercourse in society."

"That is for licking trenchers, and scratching copper, I suppose," said the Baronet *sotto voce*; and added, in a louder and more distinct tone,—“He never before heard that a setter was fit to follow any man's heels but a poacher's."

"You know it now then, Sir Bingo," answered Tyrrel; "and I hope you will not fall into so great a mistake again."

The Peace-maker here seemed to think his interference necessary, and, surmounting his taciturnity, made the following pithy speech:—"By Cot! and do you see, as you are looking for my opinion, I think there is no dispute in the matter—because, by Cot! it occurs to me, d'ye see, that ye are both right, by Cot! It may do fery well for my excellent friend Sir Bingo, who hath stables, and kennels, and what not, to maintain the six filthy prutes that are yelping and yowling all the tay, and all the neight too, under my window, by Cot!—And if they are yelping and yowling there, may I never die, but I wish they were yelping and yowling somewhere else. But then there is many a man who may be as cood a gentleman at the bottom as my worthy friend Sir Bingo, though it may be that he is poor; and if he is poor—and as if it might be my own case, or that of this honest gentleman, Mr Tirl, is that a reason or a law, that he is not to keep a prute of a tog, to help him to take his sports and his pleasures? and if he has not a stable or a kennel to put the crature into, must he not keep it in his pit of ped-room, or upon his parlour-hearth, seeing that Luckie Dods would make the kitchen too hot for the paist—and so, if Mr Tirl finds a setter more fitter for his purpose than a pointer, by Cot, I know no law against it, else may I never die the black death."

If this oration appear rather long for the occasion, the reader must recollect that Captain MacTurk had in all probability the trouble of translating it from the periphrastic language of Ossian, in which it was originally conceived in his own mind.

The Man of Law replied to the Man of Peace, "Ye are mistaken for ance in your life, Captain, for there is a law against setters; and I will undertake to prove them to be the lying dogs' which are mentioned in the auld Scots statute, and which all and sundry are discharged to keep, under a penalty of——"

Here the Captain broke in, with a very solemn mien and dignified manner—"By Cot! Master Meiklewham, and I shall be asking what you mean by talking to me of peing mistaken, and apout lying togs, sir—because I would have you to know, and to pelieve, and to very well consider, that I never was mistaken in my life, sir, unless it was when I took you for a gentleman."

"No offence, Captain," said Mr Meiklewham; "dinna break the wand of peace, man, you that should be the first to keep it. He is as cankered," continued the Man of Law, apart to his patron, "as an auld Hieland terrier that snaps at whatever comes near it—but I tell you ae thing, St Ronan's, and that is on saul and conscience, that I believe this is the very lad Tirl, that I raised a summons against before the justices—him and another hempie—in your father's time, for shooting on the Spring-well-head muirs."

"The devil you did, Mick!" replied the Lord of the Manor, also aside;—"Well, I am obliged to you for giving me some reason for the ill thoughts I had of him—I knew he was some trumperry scamp—I'll blow him, by——"

"Whisht—stop—hush—haud your tongue, St Ronan's—keep a calm sough—ye see, I intended the process, by your worthy father's desire, before the Quarter Sessions—but I ken na—The auld sheriff-clerk stood the lad's friend—and some of the justices thought it was but a mistake of the marches, and sae we couldna get a judgment—and your father was very ill of the gout, and I was feared to vex him, and so I was fain to let the process sleep, for fear they had been asoizied.—Sae ye had better gang cautiously to work, St Ronan's, for though they were summoned, they were not convict."

"Could you not take up the action again?" said Mr Mowbray.

"Whew! it's been prescribed sax or seeven year syne. It is a great shame, St Ronan's, that the game laws, whilk are the very best protection that is left to country gentlemen against the encroachment of their inferiors, rin sae short a course of prescription—a poacher may just jink ye back and forward like a flea in a blanket (wi' pardon)—hap ye out of ae county and into anither at their pleasure, like pyots—and unless ye get your thum-nail on them in the very nick o' time, ye may dine on a dish of prescription, and sup upon an absolutor."

"It is a shame, indeed," said Mowbray, turning from his confidant and agent, and addressing himself to the company in general, yet not without a peculiar look directed to Tyrrel.

"What is a shame, sir?" said Tyrrel, conceiving that the observation was particularly addressed to him.

"That we should have so many poachers upon our muirs, sir," answered St Ronan's. "I sometimes regret having countenanced the Well here, when I think how many guns it has brought on my property every season."

"Hout fie! hout awa, St Ronan's!" said his Man of Law; "no countenance the Waal! What would the country-side be without it, I would be glad to ken? It's the greatest improvement that has been made on this country since the year forty-five. Na, na, it's no the Waal that's to blame for the poaching and delinquencies on the game.—We maun to the Aultoun for the howf of that kind of cattle. Our rules at the Waal are clear and express against trespassers on the game."

"I can't think," said the squire, "what made my father sell the property of the old change-house yonder, to the hag that keeps it open out of spite, I think, and to harbour poachers and vagabonds!—I cannot conceive what made him do so foolish a thing!"

"Probably because your father wanted money, sir," said Tyrrel, dryly; "and my worthy landlady, Mrs Dods, had got some.—You know, I presume, sir, that I lodge there?"

"Oh, sir," replied Mowbray, in a tone betwixt scorn and civility, "you cannot suppose the present company is alluded to; I only presumed to mention as a fact, that we have been annoyed with unqualified people shooting on our grounds, without either liberty or license.—And I hope to have her sign taken down for it—that is all.—There was the same plague in my father's days, I think, Mick?"

But Mr Meiklewham, who did not like Tyrrel's looks so well as to induce him to become approver on the occasion, replied with an inarticulate grunt, addressed to the company, and a private admonition to his patron's own ear, "to let sleeping dogs lie."

"I can scarce forbear the fellow," said St Ronan's; "and yet I cannot well tell where my dislike to him lies—but it would be d—d folly to turn out with him for nothing; and so, honest Mick, I will be as quiet as I can."

"And that you may be so," said Meiklewham, "I think you had best take no more wine."

"I think so too," said the Squire; "for each glass I drink in his company gives me the heartburn—yet the man is not different from other raffis either—but there is a something about him intolerable to me."

So saying, he pushed back his chair from the table, and—*regis ad exemplar*—after the pattern of the Laird, all the company arose.

Sir Bingo got up with reluctance, which he testified by two or three deep growls, as he followed the rest of the company into the outer apartment, which served as an entrance-hall, and divided the dining-parlour from the tea-room, as it was called. Here, while the party were assuming their hats, for the purpose of joining the ladies' society (which old-fashioned folk used only to take up for that of going into the open air), Tyrrel asked a smart footman, who stood near, to hand him the hat which lay on the table beyond.

"Call your own servant, sir," answered the fellow, with the true insolence of a pampered menial.

"Your master," answered Tyrrel, "ought to have taught you good manners, my friend, before bringing you here."

"Sir Bingo Binks is my master," said the fellow, in the same insolent tone as before.

"Now for it, Bingie," said Mowbray, who was aware that the Baronet's pot-courage had arrived at fighting pitch.

"Yes!" said Sir Bingo aloud, and more articulately than usual—"The fellow is my servant—what has any one to say to it?"

"I at least have my mouth stopped," answered Tyrrel, with perfect composure. "I should have been surprised to have found Sir Bingo's servant better bred than himself."

"What d'ye mean by that, sir?" said Sir Bingo, coming up in an offensive attitude, for he was no mean pupil of the Fives-Court—"What d'ye mean by that? D—n you, sir! I'll serve you out before you can say dumpling."

"And I, Sir Bingo, unless you presently lay aside that look and manner, will knock you down before you can cry help."

The visitor held in his hand a slip of oak, with which he gave a flourish, that, however slight, intimated some acquaintance with the noble art of single-stick. From this demonstration Sir Bingo thought it prudent somewhat to recoil, though backed by a party of friends, who, in their zeal for his honour, would rather have seen his bones broken in conflict bold than his honour injured by a discreditable retreat; and Tyrrel seemed to have some inclination to indulge them. But, at the very instant when his hand was raised with a motion of doubtful import, a whispering voice, close to his ear, pronounced the emphatic words—"Are you a man?"

Not the thrilling tone with which our inimitable Siddons used to electrify the scene, when she uttered the same whisper, ever had a more powerful effect upon an auditor, than had these unexpected sounds on him, to whom they were now addressed. Tyrrel forgot everything—his quarrel—the circumstances in which he was placed—the company. The crowd was to him at once annihilated, and life seemed to have no other object than to follow the person who had spoken. But suddenly as he turned, the disappearance of the monitor was at least equally so; for, amid the group of commonplace countenances by which he was surrounded, there was none which assorted to the tone and words which possessed such a power over him. "Make way," he said, to those who surrounded him; and it was in the tone of one who was prepared, if necessary, to make way for himself.

Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's stepped forward. "Come, sir," said he, "this will not do—you have come here, a stranger among us, to assume airs and dignities which, by G—d, would become a duke, or a prince! We must know who or what you are, before we permit you to carry your high tone any farther."

This address seemed at once to arrest Tyrrel's anger, and his impatience to leave the company. He turned to Mowbray, collected his thoughts for an instant, and then answered him thus:—"Mr Mowbray, I seek no quarrel with any one here—with you, in particular I am most unwilling to have any disagreement. I came here by

invitation, not certainly expecting much pleasure, but at the same time supposing myself secure from incivility. In the last point, I find myself mistaken, and therefore wish the company good-night. I must also make my adieu to the ladies."

So saying, he walked several steps, yet, as it seemed, rather irresolutely, towards the door of the card-room—and then, to the increased surprise of the company, stopped suddenly, and muttering something about the "unfitness of the time," turned on his heel, and bowing haughtily, as there was way made for him, walked in the opposite direction towards the door which led to the outer hall.

"D—n me, Sir Bingo, will you let him off?" said Mowbray, who seemed to delight in pushing his friend into now scrapes—"To him, man—to him—he shows the white feather."

Sir Bingo, thus encouraged, planted himself with a look of defiance exactly between Tyrrel and the door? upon which the retreating guest, bestowing on him most emphatically the epithet Fool, seized him by the collar, and flung him out of his way with some violence.

"I am to be found at the Old Town of St Ronan's by whomsoever has any concern with me."—Without waiting the issue of this aggression farther than to utter these words, Tyrrel left the hotel. He stopped in the courtyard, however, with the air of one uncertain whither he intended to go, and who was desirous to ask some question, which seemed to die upon his tongue. At length his eye fell upon a groom, who stood not far from the door of the inn, holding in his hand a handsome pony, with a side-saddle.

"Whose"—said Tyrrel—but the rest of the question he seemed unable to utter.

The man, however, replied, as if he had heard the whole interrogation.—"Miss Mowbray's, sir, of St Ronan's—she leaves directly—and so I am walking the pony—a clever thing, sir, for a lady."

"She returns to Shaws-Castle by the Buck-stane road?"

"I suppose so, sir," said the groom. "It is the nighest, and Miss Clara cares little for rough roads. Zounds! she can spank it over wet and dry."

Tyrrel turned away from the man, and hastily left the hotel—not, however, by the road which led to the Aultoun, but by a footpath among the natural copsewood, which, following the course of the brook, intersected the usual horse-road to Shaws-Castle, the seat of Mr Mowbray, at a romantic spot called the Buck-stane.

In a small peninsula, formed by a winding of the brook, was situated, on a rising hillock, a large rough-hewn pillar of stone, said by tradition to commemorate the fall of a stag of unusual speed, size, and strength, whose flight, after having lasted through a whole summer's day, had there terminated in death, to the honour and glory of some ancient Baron of St Ronan's, and of his stanch hounds. During the periodical cuttings of the copse, which the necessities of the family of St Ronan's brought round more frequently than Ponty would have recommended, some oaks had been spared in the neighbourhood of this massive obelisk, old enough perhaps to have heard the whoop and halloo which followed the fall of the stag, and to have witnessed the raising of the rude monument, by which that great

event was commemorated. These trees, with their broad spreading boughs, made a twilight even of noon-day; and now, that the sun was approaching its setting point, their shade already anticipated night. This was especially the case where three or four of them stretched their arms over a deep gully, through which winded the horse-path to Shaws-Castle, at a point about a pistol-shot distant from the Buck-stane. As the principal access to Mr Mowbray's mansion was by a carriage-way, which passed in a different direction, the present path was left almost in a state of nature, full of large stones, and broken by gullies, delightful, from the varied character of its banks, to the picturesque traveller, and most inconvenient, day, dangerous, to him who had a stumbling horse.

The footpath to the Buck-stane, which here joined the bridle-road, had been constructed at the expense of a subscription, under the direction of Mr Winterblossom, who had taste enough to see the beauties of this secluded spot, which was exactly such as in earlier times might have harboured the ambush of some marauding chief. This recollection had not escaped Tyrrel, to whom the whole scenery was familiar, who now hastened to the spot, as one which peculiarly suited his present purpose. He sat down by one of the larger protecting trees, and, screened by its enormous branches from observation, was enabled to watch the road from the Hotel for a great part of its extent, while he was himself invisible to any who might travel upon it.

Meanwhile his sudden departure excited a considerable sensation among the party whom he had just left, and who were induced to form conclusions not very favourable to his character. Sir Bingo, in particular, blustered loudly and more loudly, in proportion to the increasing distance betwixt himself and his antagonist, declaring his resolution to be revenged on the scoundrel for his insolence—to drive him from the neighbourhood,—and I know not what other menaces of formidable import. The devil, in the old stories of *diablerie*, was always sure to start up at the elbow of any one who pursued diabolical purposes, and only wanted a little backing from the evil fiend to carry his imaginations into action. The noble Captain MacTurk had so far this property of his infernal majesty, that the least hint of an approaching quarrel drew him always to the vicinity of the party concerned. He was now at Sir Bingo's side, and was taking his own view of the matter, in his character of peace-maker.

"By Cot! and it's very exceedingly true, my goot friend, Sir Bingo—and as you say, it concerns your honour, and the honour of the place, and credit and character of the whole company, by Cot! that this matter be properly looked after; for, as I think, he laid hands on your body, my excellent goot friend."

"Hands, Captain MacTurk!" exclaimed Sir Bingo, in some confusion; "no, blast him—not so bad as that neither—if he had, I should have handed *him* over the window—but, by —, the fellow had the impudence to offer to collar me—I had just stepped back to square at him, when, curse me, the blackguard ran away."

"Right, vara right, Sir Bingo," said the Man of Law, "a vara perfect blackguard, a poaching sorning sort of fallow, that I will

have scoured out of the country before he be three days aulder. Fash you your beard nae farther about the matter, Sir Bingo."

"By Cot! but I can tell you, Mr Meiklewham," said the Man of Peace, with great solemnity of visage, "that you are scalding your lips in other folk's kale, and that it is necessary for the credit, and honour, and respect of this company, at the Well of St Ronan's, that Sir Bingo goes by more competent advice than yours upon the present occasion, Mr Meiklewham; for though your counsel may do very well in a small debt-court, here, do you see, Mr Meiklewham, is a question of honour, which is not a thing in your line, as I take it."

"No, before George! is it not," answered Meiklewham; "e'en take it all to yoursell, Captain, and meikle ye are likely to make on't."

"Then," said the Captain, "Sir Bincio, I will beg the favour of your company to the smoking room, where we may have a cigar and a glass of gin-twist; and we will consider how the honour of the company must be supported and upholden upon the present conjuncture."

The Baronet complied with this invitation, as much, perhaps, in consequence of the medium through which the Captain intended to convey his warlike counsels, as for the pleasure with which he anticipated the result of these counsels themselves. He followed the military step of his leader, whose stride was more stiff, and his form more perpendicular, when exalted by the consciousness of an approaching quarrel, to the smoking room, where, sighing as he lighted his cigar, Sir Bingo prepared to listen to the words of wisdom and valour as they should flow in mingled stream from the lips of Captain MacTurk.

Meanwhile the rest of the company joined the ladies. "Here has been Clara," said the Lady Penelope to Mr Mowbray; "here has been Miss Mowbray among us, like the ray of a sun which does but dazzle and die."

"Ah, poor Clara," said Mowbray; "I thought I saw her thread her way through the crowd a little while since, but I was not sure."

"Well," said Lady Penelope, "she has asked us all up to Shaws-Castle on Thursday, to a *déjeuner à la fourchette*—I trust you confirm you sister's invitation, Mr Mowbray?"

"Certainly, Lady Penelope," replied Mowbray; "and I am truly glad Clara has had the grace to think of it—How we shall acquit ourselves is a different question, for neither she nor I are much accustomed to play host or hostess."

"Oh! it will be delightful, I am sure," said Lady Penelope; "Clara has a grace in everything she does; and you, Mr Mowbray, can be a perfectly well-bred gentleman—when you please."

"That qualification is severe—Well—good manners be my speed—I will certainly please to do my best, when I see your ladyship at Shaws-Castle, which has received no company this many a day.—Clara and I have lived a wild life of it, each in their own way."

"Indeed, Mr Mowbray," said Lady Binks, "if I might presume to speak—I think you do suffer your sister to ride about too much without an attendant. I know Miss Mowbray rides as woman never rode before, but still an accident may happen."

"An accident?" replied Mowbray—"Ah, Lady Binks! accidents happen as frequently when ladies *have* attendants as when they are without them."

Lady Binks, who, in her maiden state, had cantered a good deal out these woods under Sir Bingo's escort, coloured, looked spiteful, and was silent.

"Besides," said John Mowbray, more lightly, "where is the risk, after all? There are no wolves in our woods to eat up our pretty Red-Riding Hoods; and no lions either—except those of Lady Penelope's train."

"Who draw the car of Cybele," said Mr Chatterly.

Lady Penelope luckily did not understand the allusion, which was indeed better intended than imagined.

"Apropos!" she said; "what have you done with the great lion of the day? I see Mr Tyrrel nowhere—Is he finishing an additional tittle with Sir Bingo?"

"Mr Tyrrel, madam," said Mowbray, "has acted successively the lion rampant, and the lion passant: he has been quarrelsome, and has run away—fled from the ire of your doughty knight, Lady Binks."

"I am sure I hope not," said Lady Binks; "my Chevalier's unsuccessful campaigns have been unable to overcome his taste for quarrels—a victory would make a fighting-man of him for life."

"That inconvenience might bring its own consolations," said Mr Chatterly, apart to Mowbray; "quarrellers do not usually live long."

"No, no," replied Mowbray, "the lady's despair which broke out just now, even in her own despite, is quite natural—absolutely legitimate. Sir Bingo will give her no chance that way."

Mowbray then made his bow to Lady Penelope, and in answer to her request that he would join the ball or the card-table, observed, that he had no time to lose; that the heads of the old domestics at Hawks-Castle would be by this time absolutely turned, by the apprehensions of what Thursday was to bring forth; and that as Clara could certainly give no directions for the proper arrangements, it was necessary that he should take that trouble himself.

"If you ride smartly," said Lady Penelope, "you may save even temporary alarm, by overtaking Clara, dear creature, ere she gets home.—She sometimes suffers her pony to go at will along the lane, as slow as Betty Foy's."

"Ah, but then," said little Miss Digges, "Miss Mowbray sometimes gallops as if the lark was a snail to her pony—and it quite frights one to see her."

The Doctor touched Mrs Blower, who had approached so as to be on the verge of the genteel circle, though she did not venture within it,—they exchanged sagacious looks, and a most pitiful shake of the head. Mowbray's eye happened at that moment to glance on them; and doubtless, notwithstanding their hasting to compose their countenances to a different expression, he comprehended what was passing through their minds;—and perhaps it awoke a corresponding note in his own. He took his hat, and with a cast of thought upon

his countenance which it seldom wore, left the apartment. A moment afterwards his horse's feet were heard spurning the pavement as he started off at a sharp pace.

"There is something singular about these Mowbrays to-night," said Lady Penelope.—"Clara, poor dear angel, is always particular but I should have thought Mowbray had too much worldly wisdom to be fanciful.—What are you consulting your *souvenir* for with such attention, my dear Lady Binks?"

"Only for the age of the moon," said her ladyship, putting the little tortoise-shell-bound calendar into her reticule; and having done so, she proceeded to assist Lady Penelope in the arrangements for the evening.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING.

We meet as shadows in the land of dreams,
Which speak not but in signs.

Anonymous.

BEHIND one of the old oaks which we have described in the preceding chapter, shrouding himself from observation like a hunter watching for his game, or an Indian for his enemy, but with different, very different purpose, Tyrrel lay on his breast near the Buckstane, his eye on the horse-road which winded down the valley, and his ear alertly awake to every sound which mingled with the passing breeze, or with the ripple of the brook.

"To have met her in yonder congregated assembly of brutes and fools"—such was a part of his internal reflections,—"had been little less than an act of madness—madness almost equal in its degree to that cowardice which has hitherto prevented my approaching her, when our eventful meeting might have taken place unobserved.—But now—now—my resolution is as fixed as the place is itself favourable. I will not wait till some chance again shall throw us together, with a hundred malignant eyes to watch, and wonder, and stare, and try in vain to account for the expression of feelings which I might find it impossible to suppress.—Hark—hark!—I hear the tread of a horse.—No—it was the changeful sound of the water rushing over the pebbles. Surely she cannot have taken the other road to Shaws-Castle!—No—the sounds become distinct—her figure is visible on the path, coming swiftly forward.—Have I the courage to show myself?—I have—the hour is come, and what must be shall be."

Yet this resolution was scarcely formed ere it began to fluctuate, when he reflected upon the fittest manner of carrying it into execution. To show himself at a distance might give the lady an opportunity of turning back and avoiding the interview which he had determined upon—to hide himself till the moment when her horse, in rapid motion, should pass his lurking-place, might be attended

th danger to the rider—and while he hesitated which course to pursue, there was some chance of his missing the opportunity of presenting himself to Miss Mowbray at all. He was himself sensible of this, formed a hasty and desperate resolution not to suffer the present moment to escape, and just as the ascent induced the pony to slacken pace, Tyrrel stood in the middle of the defile, about six yards distant from the young lady.

She pulled up the reins, and stopped as if arrested by a thunder-bolt.—“Clara!”—“Tyrrel!” These were the only words which were exchanged between them, until Tyrrel, moving his feet as slowly as they had been of lead, began gradually to diminish the distance which lay betwixt them. It was then that, observing his closer approach, Miss Mowbray called out with great eagerness,—“No nearer—no nearer!—So long have I endured your presence, but if you approach me more closely, I shall be mad indeed!”

“What do you fear?” said Tyrrel, in a hollow voice—“What can you fear?” and he continued to draw nearer, until they were within paces of each other.

Clara, meanwhile, dropping her bridle, clasped her hands together, and held them up towards Heaven, muttering in a voice scarcely audible, “Great God!—if this apparition be formed by my heated fancy, let it pass away; if it be real, enable me to bear its presence! Tell me, I conjure you, are you Francis Tyrrel in blood and body, or is this but one of those wandering visions, that have crossed my path and glared on me, but without daring to abide my steadfast glance?”

“I am Francis Tyrrel,” answered he, “in blood and body, as much as she to whom I speak is Clara Mowbray.”

“Then God have mercy on us both!” said Clara, in a tone of deep feeling.

“Amen!” said Tyrrel—“But what avails this excess of agitation? You saw me but now, Miss Mowbray—your voice still rings in my ears—You saw me but now—you spoke to me—and that when I was among strangers—Why not preserve your composure when we are where no human eye can see—no human ear can hear?”

“Is it so?” said Clara; “and was it indeed yourself whom I saw when now?—I thought so, and something I said at the time—but my mind has been but ill settled since we last met—But I am well now—quite well—I have invited all the people yonder to come to Shaws-Castle—my brother desired me to do it—I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing Mr Tyrrel there—though I think there is some old grudge between my brother and you.”

“Alas! Clara, you mistake. Your brother I have scarcely seen,” replied Tyrrel, much distressed, and apparently uncertain in what to address her, which might soothe and not irritate her mental anxiety, of which he could now entertain no doubt.

“True—true,” she said, after a moment’s reflection, “my brother is then at college. It was my father, my poor father, whom you and some quarrel with.—But you will come to Shaws-Castle on Thursday, at two o’clock?—John will be glad to see you—he can be as good when he pleases—and then we will talk of old times—I must get on to have things ready—Good evening.”

She would have passed him, but he took gently hold of the rein of her bridle.—“I will walk with you, Clara,” he said; “the road is rough and dangerous—you ought not to ride fast.—I will walk along with you, and we will talk of former times now, more convenient than in company.”

“True—true—very true, Mr Tyrrel, it shall be as you say. My brother obliges me sometimes to go into company at that hateful place down yonder; and I do so because he likes it, and because the folks let me have my own way, and come and go as I list. Do you know, Tyrrel, that very often when I am there, and John has his eye on me, I can carry it on as gaily as if you and I had never met?”

“I would to God we never had,” said Tyrrel, in a trembling voice “since this is to be the end of all!”

“And wherefore should not sorrow be the end of sin and of folly? And when did happiness come of disobedience?—And when did sound sleep visit a bloody pillow? That is what I say to myself, Tyrrel, and that is what you must learn to say too, and then you will bear your burden as cheerfully as I endure mine. If we have more than our deserts, why should we complain?—You are shedding tears, I think—Is not that childish?—They say it is a relief—if you weep on, and I will look another way.”

Tyrrel walked on by the pony's side, in vain endeavouring to compose himself so as to reply.”

“Poor Tyrrel,” said Clara, after she had remained silent for some time—“Poor Frank Tyrrel!—Perhaps you will say in your turn, Poor Clara—but I am not so poor in spirit as you—the blast may bend, but it shall never break me.”

There was another long pause; for Tyrrel was unable to determine with himself in what strain he could address the unfortunate young lady, without awakening recollections equally painful to her feelings and dangerous, when her precarious state of health was considered. At length she herself proceeded:—

“What needs all this, Tyrrel?—and, indeed, why came you here?—Why did I find you but now brawling and quarrelling among the loudest of the brawlers and quarrellers of yonder idle and dissipated debauchees?—You were used to have more temper—more sense. Another person—ay, another that you and I once knew—he might have committed such a folly, and he would have acted perhaps in character—But you, who pretend to wisdom—for shame, for shame!—And indeed, when we talk of that, what wisdom was there in coming hither at all?—or what good purpose can your remaining here serve?—Surely you need not come, either to renew your own unhappiness or to augment mine?”

“To augment yours—God forbid!” answered Tyrrel. “No—I came hither only because, after so many years of wandering, I longed to revisit the spot where all my hopes lay buried.”

“Ay—buried is the word,” she replied, “crushed down and buried when they budded fairest. I often think of it, Tyrrel; and there are times when, Heaven help me! I can think of little else.—Look at me—you remember what I was—see what grief and solitude have made me.”

She flung back the veil which surrounded her riding hat, and which had hitherto hid her face. It was the same countenance which he had formerly known in all the bloom of early beauty; but though the beauty remained the bloom was fled for ever. Not the agitation of exercise—not that which arose from the pain and confusion of this unexpected interview, had called to poor Clara's cheek even the momentary semblance of colour. Her complexion was marble-white, like that of the finest piece of statuary.

"Is it possible?" said Tyrrel; "can grief have made such ravages?" "Grief," replied Clara, "is the sickness of the mind, and its sister is the sickness of the body—they are twin-sisters, Tyrrel, and are seldom long separate. Sometimes the body's disease comes first, and blinds our eyes and palsies our hands, before the fire of our mind and of our intellect is quenched. But mark me—soon after comes her cruel sister with her urn, and sprinkles cold dew on our hopes and on our loves, our memory, our recollections, and our feelings, and shows us that they cannot survive the decay of our bodily powers."

"Alas!" said Tyrrel, "is it come to this?"

"To this," she replied, speaking from the rapid and irregular train of her own ideas, rather than comprehending the purport of his sorrowful exclamation,—“to this it must ever come while immortal souls are wedded to the perishable substance of which our bodies are composed. There is another state, Tyrrel, in which it will be otherwise—God grant our time of enjoying it were come!”

She fell into a melancholy pause, which Tyrrel was afraid to disturb. The quickness with which she spoke marked but too plainly the irregular succession of thought, and he was obliged to restrain the agony of his own feelings, rendered more acute by a thousand painful recollections, lest, by giving way to his expressions of grief, he should throw her into a still more disturbed state of mind.

"I did not think," she proceeded, "that after so horrible a separation, and so many years, I could have met you thus calmly and reasonably. But although what we were formerly to each other can never be forgotten, it is now all over, and we are only friends—Is it not so?"

Tyrrel was unable to reply.

"But I must not remain here," she said, "till the evening grows darker on me.—We shall meet again, Tyrrel—meet as friends—nothing more—You will come up to Shaws-Castle and see me?—no need of secrecy now—my poor father is in his grave, and his prejudices sleep with him—my brother John is kind, though he is stern and severe sometimes—Indeed, Tyrrel, I believe he loves me, though he has taught me to tremble at his frown when I am in spirits, and talk too much—But he loves me, at least I think so, for I am sure I love him; and I try to go down amongst them yonder, and to endure their folly, and, all things considered, I do carry on the farce of life wonderfully well—We are but actors, you know, and the world but stage."

"And ours has been a sad and tragic scene," said Tyrrel, in the bitterness of his heart, unable any longer to refrain from speech.

"It has indeed—but, Tyrrel, when was it otherwise with engage-

ments formed in youth and in folly? You and I would, you know, become men and women, while we were yet scarcely more than children—We have run, while yet in our nonage, through the passions and adventures of youth, and therefore we are now old before our day, and the winter of our life has come on ere its summer was well begun.—O Tyrrel! often and often have I thought of this!—Thought of it often? Alas! when will the time come that shall be able to think of anything else!”

The poor young woman sobbed bitterly, and her tears began to flow with a freedom which they had not probably enjoyed for a length of time. Tyrrel walked on by the side of her horse, which now prosecuted its road homewards, unable to devise a proper mode of addressing the unfortunate young lady, and fearing alike to awaken her passions and his own. Whatever he might have proposed to say, was disconcerted by the plain indications that her mind was clouded, more or less slightly, with a shade of insanity, which deranged though it had not destroyed, her powers of judgment.

At length he asked her, with as much calmness as he could assume—if she was contented—if aught could be done to render her situation more easy—if there was aught of which she could complain which he might be able to remedy? She answered gently, that she was calm and resigned, when her brother would permit her to stay at home; but that when she was brought into society, she experienced such a change as that which the water of the brook that slumbers in a crystalline pool of the rock may be supposed to feel, when, gliding from its quiet bed, it becomes involved in the hurry of the cataract.

“But my brother Mowbray,” she said, “thinks he is right,—and perhaps he is so. There are things on which we may ponder too long;—and were he mistaken, why should I not constrain myself in order to please him?—there are so few left to whom I can now give either pleasure or pain.—I am a gay girl, too, in conversation, Tyrrel—still as gay for a moment, as when you used to chide me for my folly. So, now I have told you all,—I have one question to ask on my part—one question—if I had but breath to ask it—Is *he* still alive?”

“He lives,” answered Tyrrel, but in a tone so low, that nought but the eager attention which Miss Mowbray paid could possibly have caught such feeble sounds.

“Lives!” she exclaimed,—“lives!—he lives, and the blood on your hand is not then indelibly imprinted—O Tyrrel, did you but know the joy which this assurance gives to me!”

“Joy!” replied Tyrrel—“joy, that the wretch lives who has poisoned our happiness for ever!—lives, perhaps, to claim you for his own?”

“Never, never shall he—dare he do so,” replied Clara, wildly, “while water can drown, while cords can strangle, steel pierce—while there is a precipice on the hill, a pool in the river—never—never!”

“Be not thus agitated, my dearest Clara,” said Tyrrel; “I spoke I know not what—he lives indeed—but far distant, and, I trust, never again to revisit Scotland.”

He would have said more, but that, agitated with fear or passion, he struck her horse impatiently with her riding whip. The spirited animal, thus stimulated and at the same time restrained, became fractable, and reared so much, that Tyrrel, fearful of the consequences, and trusting to Clara's skill as a horsewoman, thought he best consulted her safety in letting go the rein. The animal instantly lunged forward on a broken and hilly path at a very rapid pace, and was soon lost to Tyrrel's anxious eyes.

As he stood pondering whether he ought not to follow Miss Mowbray towards Shaws-Castle, in order to be satisfied that no accident had befallen her on the road, he heard the tread of a horse's feet advancing hastily in the same direction, leading from the Hotel. Unwilling to be observed at this moment, he stepped aside under the shelter of the underwood, and presently afterwards saw Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, followed by a groom, ride hastily past his lurking-place, and pursue the same road which had been just taken by his sister. The presence of her brother seemed to assure Miss Mowbray's safety, and so removed Tyrrel's chief reason for following her. Involved in deep and melancholy reflection upon what had passed, nearly satisfied that his longer residence in Clara's vicinity could only add to her unhappiness and his own, yet unable to tear himself from that neighbourhood, or to relinquish feelings which had become entwined with his heart-strings, he returned to his lodgings in the town, in a state of mind very little to be envied.

Tyrrel, on entering his apartment, found that it was not lighted, and were the Abigails of Mrs Dods quite so alert as a waiter at Long's might have been to supply him with candles. Unapt at any time to exact much personal attendance, and desirous to shun at that moment the necessity of speaking to any person whatever, even on the most trifling subject, he walked down into the kitchen to supply himself with what he wanted. He did not at first observe that Mrs Dods herself was present in this the very centre of her empire, far less that a lofty air of indignation was seated on the worthy matron's brow. At first it only vented itself in broken soliloquy and interjections; as, for example, "Vera bonny wark this!—vera creditable wark, indeed!—a decent house to be disturbed at these hours—Keep a public—as weel keep a bedlam!"

Finding these murmurs attracted no attention, the dame placed herself betwixt her guest and the door, to which he was now retiring with his lighted candle, and demanded of him what was the meaning of such behaviour.

"Of what behaviour, madam?" said her guest, repeating her question in a tone of sternness and impatience so unusual with him, that perhaps she was sorry at the moment that she had provoked him out of his usual patient indifference; nay, she might even feel intimidated at the altercation she had provoked, for the resentment of a quiet and patient person has always in it something formidable to the professed and habitual grumbler. But her pride was too great to think of a retreat, after having sounded the signal for combat, and so she continued, though in a tone somewhat lowered.

"Maister Tirl, I wad but just ask you, that are a man of sense,

whether I hae ony right to take your behaviour weel? Here have you been these ten days and mair, eating the best, and drinking the best, and taking up the best room in my house; and now to think of your gaun down and taking up with yon idle harebrained cattle at the Waal—I maun e'en be plain wi' ye—I like nane of the fair-fashioned folk that can say My Jo, and think it no; and therefore——”

“Mrs Dods,” said Tyrrel, interrupting her, “I have no time at present for trifles. I am obliged to you for your attention while I have been in your house; but the disposal of my time, here or elsewhere, must be according to my own ideas of pleasure or business—If you are tired of me as a guest, send in your bill to-morrow.”

“My bill!” said Mrs Dods; “my bill to-morrow! And what for no wait till Saturday, when it may be cleared atween us, plack and bawbee, as it was on Saturday last?”

“Well—we will talk of it to-morrow, Mrs Dods—Good-night.” And he withdrew accordingly.

Luckie Dods stood ruminating for a moment. “The deil’s in him,” she said, “for he winna bide being thrawn. And I think the deil’s in me too for thraving him, sic a canny lad, and sae gude a customer;—and I am judging he has something on his mind—want of siller it canna be—I am sure if I thought that, I wadna care about my small thing.—But want o’ siller it canna be—he pays ower the shillings as if they were slate stanes, and that’s no the way that folks part with their siller when there’s but little on’t—I ken weel enough how a customer looks that’s near the grund of the purse.—Weel! I hope he winna mind onything of this nonsense the morn. and I’ll try to guide my tongue something better.—Heh, sirs! but, as the minister says, it’s an unruly member—troth, I am whiles ashamed o’t mysell.”

CHAPTER X.

RESOURCES.

Come, let me have thy counsel, for I need it;
Thou art of those, who better help their friends
With sage advice, than usurers with gold,
Or brawlers with their swords—I’ll trust to thee,
For I ask only from thee words, not deeds.

The Devil hath met his Match.

THE day of which we last gave the events chanced to be Monday and two days therefore intervened betwixt it and that for which the entertainment was fixed, that was to assemble in the halls of the Lord of the Manor the flower of the company now at St Ronan’s Well. The interval was but brief for the preparations necessary on an occasion so unusual; since the house, though delightfully situated, was in very indifferent repair, and for years had never received any visitors, except when some blithe bachelor or fox-hunter share

the hospitality of Mr Mowbray; an event which became daily more and more uncommon; for, as he himself almost lived at the Well, he generally contrived to receive his companions where it could be done without expense to himself. Besides, the health of his sister afforded an irresistible apology to any of those old-fashioned Scottish gentlemen, who might be too apt (in the rudeness of more primitive days) to consider a friend's house as their own. Mr Mowbray was now, however, to the great delight of all his companions, nailed down, by invitation given and accepted, and they looked forward to the accomplishment of his promise with the eagerness which the prospect of some entertaining novelty never fails to produce among idlers.

A good deal of trouble devolved on Mr Mowbray, and his trusty agent, Mr Meiklewham, before anything like decent preparation could be made for the ensuing entertainment; and they were left to their unassisted endeavours by Clara, who, during both the Tuesday and Wednesday, obstinately kept herself secluded; nor could her brother, either by threats or flattery, extort from her any light concerning her purpose on the approaching and important Thursday. To do John Mowbray justice, he loved his sister as much as he was capable of loving anything but himself; and when, in several arguments, he had the mortification to find that she was not to be prevailed on to afford her assistance, he, without complaint, quietly set himself to do the best he could by his own unassisted judgment or opinion with regard to the necessary preparations.

This was not, at present, so easy a task as might be supposed; for Mowbray was ambitious of that character of *ton* and elegance, which masculine faculties alone are seldom capable of attaining on such momentous occasions. The more solid materials of a collation were indeed to be obtained for money from the next market-town, and were purchased accordingly; but he felt it was likely to present the vulgar plenty of a farmer's feast, instead of the elegant entertainment, which might be announced in a corner of the county paper as given by John Mowbray, Esq. of St Ronan's, to the gay and fashionable company assembled at that celebrated spring. There was likely to be all sorts of error and irregularity in dishing, and in sending up; for Shaws-Castle boasted neither an accomplished housekeeper, nor a kitchenmaid with a hundred pair of hands to execute her mandates. All the domestic arrangements were on the minutest system of economy consistent with ordinary decency, except in the stables, which were excellent and well kept. But can a groom of the stables perform the labours of a groom of the chambers? or can the gamekeeper arrange in tempting order the carcasses of the birds he has shot, strew them with flowers, and garnish them with piquant sauces? It would be as reasonable to expect a gallant soldier to act as undertaker, and conduct the funeral of the enemy he has slain.

In a word, Mowbray talked, and consulted, and advised, and squabbled with the deaf cook, and a little old man whom he called the butler, until he at length perceived so little chance of bringing order out of confusion, or making the least advantageous impression on such obdurate understandings as he had to deal with, that he fairly committed the whole matter of the collation, with two or three hearty

curses, to the charge of the officials principally concerned, and proceeded to take the state of the furniture and apartments under his consideration.

Here he found himself almost equally helpless; for what male wit is adequate to the thousand little coquetries practised in such arrangements? how can masculine eyes judge of the degree of *demi-jour* which is to be admitted into a decorated apartment, or discriminate where the broad light should be suffered to fall on a tolerable picture, where it should be excluded, lest the stiff daub of a periwigged grandsire should become too rigidly prominent? And if men are unfit for weaving such a fairy web of light and darkness as may best suit furniture, ornaments, and complexions, how shall they be adequate to the yet more mysterious office of arranging, while they disarrange, the various movables in the apartment? so that while all has the air of negligence and chance, the seats are placed as if they had been transported by a wish to the spot most suitable for accommodation; stiffness and confusion are at once avoided, the company are neither limited to a formal circle of chairs, nor exposed to break their noses over wandering stools; but the arrangements seem to correspond to what ought to be the tone of the conversation, easy without being confused, and regulated without being constrained or stiffened.

Then how can a clumsy male wit attempt the arrangement of all the *chiffonerie*, by which old snuff-boxes, heads of canes, pomander boxes, lamer beads, and all the trash usually found in the pigeon-holes of the bureaux of old-fashioned ladies, may be now brought into play, by throwing them, carelessly grouped with other unconsidered trifles, such as are to be seen in the windows of a pawnbroker's shop, upon a marble *encognure*, or a mosaic work-table, thereby turning to advantage the trash and trinketry, which all the old maids or magpies, who have inhabited the mansion for a century, have contrived to accumulate. With what admiration of the ingenuity of the fair artist have I sometimes pried into these miscellaneous groups of *pseudo-bijouterie*, and seen the great-grandsire's thumb-ring couchant with the coral and bells of the first-born—and the boatswain's whistle of some old naval uncle, or his silver tobacco-box, redolent of Oroonoko, happily grouped with the mother's ivory comb-case, still odorous of musk, and with some virgin aunt's tortoise-shell spectacle-case, and the eagle's talon of ebony, with which, in the days of long and stiff stays, our grandmothers were wont to alleviate any little irritation in their back or shoulders! Then there was the silver strainer, on which, in more economical times than ours, the lady of the house placed the tea-leaves, after the very last drop had been exhausted, that they might afterwards be hospitably divided among the company, to be eaten with sugar, and with bread and butter. Blessings upon a fashion which has rescued from the claws of abigails, and the melting-pot of the silversmith, those neglected *cimelia*, for the benefit of antiquaries and the decoration of side-tables! But who shall presume to place them there, unless under the direction of female taste! and of that Mr Mowbray, though possessed of a large stock of such treasures, was for the present entirely deprived.

This digression upon his difficulties is already too long, or I might

mention the Laird's inexperience in the art of making the worse appear the better garnishment, of hiding a darned carpet with a new floor-cloth, and flinging an Indian shawl over a faded and threadbare sofa. But I have said enough, and more than enough, to explain his dilemma to any unassisted bachelor, who, without mother, sister, or cousin, without skilful housekeeper, or experienced clerk of the kitchen, or valet of parts and figure, adventures to give an entertainment, and aspires to make it elegant and *comme il faut*.

The sense of his insufficiency was the more vexatious to Mowbray, as he was aware he would find sharp critics in the ladies, and particularly in his constant rival, Lady Penelope Penfeather. He was therefore incessant in his exertions, and for two whole days ordered and disordered, demanded, commanded, countermanded, and reprimanded, without pause or cessation. The companion, for he could not be termed an assistant of his labours, was his trusty agent, who trotted from room to room after him, affording him exactly the same degree of sympathy which a dog doth to his master when distressed in mind, by looking in his face from time to time with a piteous gaze, as if to assure him that he partakes of his trouble, though he neither comprehends the cause or the extent of it, nor has in the slightest degree the power to remove it.

At length, when Mowbray had got some matters arranged to his mind, and abandoned a great many which he would willingly have put in better order, he sat down to dinner upon the Wednesday preceding the appointed day, with his worthy aide-de-camp, Mr Meikleham; and after bestowing a few muttered curses upon the whole concern, and the fantastic old maid who had brought him into the scrape by begging an invitation, declared that all things might now go to the devil their own way, for so sure as his name was John Mowbray, he would trouble himself no more about them.

Keeping this doughty resolution, he sat down to dinner with his counsel learned in the law; and speedily they despatched the dish of chops which was set before them, and the better part of the bottle of red port, which served for its menstruum.

"We are well enough now," said Mowbray, "though we have had one of their d—d kickshaws."

"A wame-fou' is a wame-fou'," said the writer, swabbing his greasy chops, "whether it be of the barleymeal or the bran."

"A cart-horse thinks so," said Mowbray; "but we must do as others do, and gentlemen and ladies are of a different opinion."

"The waur for themselves and the country baith, St Ronan's—'s the jinketing and the jirbling wi' tea and wi' trumpery that brings our nobles to ninepence, and mony a het ha'-house to a hired lodging in the Abbey."

The young gentleman paused for a few minutes—filled a bumper, and pushed the bottle to the senior—then said abruptly, "Do you believe in luck, Mick?"

"In luck?" answered the attorney; "what do you mean by the question?"

"Why, because I believe in luck myself—in a good or bad run of luck at cards."

"You wad have mair luck the day, if you had never touched them," replied his confidant.

"That is not the question now," said Mowbray; "but what I wonder at is the wretched chance that has attended us miserable Lairds of St Ronan's for more than a hundred years, that we have always been getting worse in the world, and never better. Never has there been such a backsliding generation, as the parson would say—half the country once belonged to my ancestors, and now the last furrows of it seem to be flying."

"Fleeing!" said the writer, "they are barking and fleeing baith. —This Shaws-Castle here, I'se warrant it flee up the chimney after the rest, were it not weel fastened down with your grandfather's tailzie."

"D—n the tailzie!" said Mowbray; "if they had meant to keep up their estate, they should have entailed it when it was worth keeping; to tie a man down to such an insignificant thing as St Ronan's, is like tethering a horse on six roods of a Highland moor."

"Ye have broke weel in on the mailing by your feus down at the Well," said Meiklewham, "and raxed ower the tether maybe a wee bit farther than ye had ony right to do."

"It was by your advice, was it not?" said the laird.

"I'se ne'er deny it, St Ronan's," answered the writer; "but I am such a gude-natured guse, that I just set about pleasing you as an auld wife pleases a bairn."

"Ay," said the man of pleasure, "when she reaches it a knife to cut its own fingers with.—These acres would have been safe enough, if it had not been for your d—d advice."

"And yet you were grumbling e'en now," said the man of business, "that you have not the power to gar the whole estate flee like a wild-duck across a bog? Troth, you need care little about it; for if you have incurred an irritancy—and sae thinks Mr Wisebehind, the advocate, upon an A. B. memorial that I laid before him—your sister, or your sister's goodman, if she should take the fancy to marry, might bring a declarator, and evict St Ronan's frae ye in the course of twa or three sessions."

"My sister will never marry," said John Mowbray.

"That's easily said," replied the writer; "but as broken a ship's come to land. If onybody kend o' the chance she has o' the estate, there's mony a weel-doing man would think little of the bee in her bonnet."

"Harkye, Mr Meiklewham," said the laird, "I will be obliged to you if you will speak of Miss Mowbray with the respect due to her father's daughter, and my sister."

"Nae offence, St Ronan's, nae offence," answered the man of law; "but ilka man maun speak sae as to be understood,—that is when he speaks about business. Ye ken yoursell, that Miss Clara is no just like other folks; and were I you—it's my duty to speak plain—I wad e'en gie in a bit scroll of a petition to the Lords, to be appointed Curator Bonis, in respect of her incapacity to manage her own affairs."

"Meiklewham," said Mowbray, "you are a——" and then stopped short.

"What am I, Mr Mowbray?" said Meiklewham, somewhat sternly—"What am I? I wad be glad to ken what I am."

"A very good lawyer, I daresay," replied St Ronan's, who was too much in the power of his agent to give way to his first impulse. "But I must tell you, that rather than take such a measure against poor Clara, as you recommend, I would give her up the estate, and become an ostler or a postilion for the rest of my life."

"Ah, St Ronan's," said the man of law, "if you had wished to keep up the auld house, you should have taken another trade than to become an ostler or a postilion. What ailed you, man, but to have been a lawyer as weel as other folks? My auld master had a wee bit Latin about *rerum dominos gentemque togatam*, whilk signified, he said, that all lairds should be lawyers."

"All lawyers are likely to become lairds, I think," replied Mowbray; "they purchase our acres by the thousand, and pay us, according to the old story, with a multiplepoinding, as your learned friends call it, Mr Meiklewham."

"Weel—and mightna you have purchased as weel as other folks?"

"Not I," replied the laird; "I have no turn for that service; I should only have wasted bombazine on my shoulders, and flour upon my three-tailed wig—should but have lounged away my mornings in the Outer-House, and my evenings at the playhouse, and acquired no more law than what would have made me a wise justice at a Small-debt Court."

"If you gained little, you would have lost as little," said Meiklewham; "and albeit ye were nae great gun at the bar, ye might aye have gotten a Sherifffdom, or a Commissaryship, amang the lave, to keep the banes green; and sae ye might have saved your estate from deteriorating, if ye didna mend it muckle."

"Yes, but I could not have had the chance of doubling it as I might have done," answered Mowbray, "had that inconstant jade, Fortune, but stood a moment faithful to me. I tell you, Mick, that I have been, within this twelvemonth, worth a hundred thousand—worth fifty thousand—worth nothing, but the remnant of this wretched estate, which is too little to do one good while it is mine, though, were it sold, I could start again, and mend my hand a little."

"Ay, ay, just fling the helve after the hatchet," said his legal adviser—"that's a' you think of. What signifies winning a hundred thousand pounds, if you win them to lose them a' again?"

"What signifies it?" replied Mowbray. "Why, it signifies as much to a man of spirit, as having won a battle signifies to a general—no matter that he is beaten afterwards in his turn, he knows there is luck for him as well as others, and so he has spirit to try it again. Here is the young Earl of Etherington will be amongst us in a day or two—they say he is up to everything—if I had but five hundred to begin with, I should be soon up to him."

"Mr Mowbray," said Meiklewham, "I am sorry for ye. I have been your house's man of business—I may say, in some measure, your house's servant—and now I am to see an end of it all, and just by the lad that I thought maist likely to set it up again better than

ever ; for, to do ye justice, you have aye had an ee to your ain interest, sae far as your lights gaed. It brings tears into my auld een."

"Never weep for the matter, Mick," answered Mowbray ; "some of it will stick, my old boy, in your pockets, if not in mine—your service will not be altogether gratuitous, my old friend—the labourer is worthy of his hire."

"Well I wot is he," said the writer ; "but double fees would hardly carry folk through some wark. But if ye will have siller, ye maun have siller—but, I warrant, it goes just where the rest gaed."

"No, by twenty devils !" exclaimed Mowbray, "to fail this time is impossible—Jack Wolverine was too strong for Etherington at anything he could name ; and I can beat Wolverine from the Land's-End to Johnnie Groat's—but there must be something to go upon—the blunt must be had, Mick."

"Very likely—nae doubt—that is always provided it *can* be had," answered the legal adviser.

"That's your business, my old cock," said Mowbray. "This youngster will be here perhaps to-morrow, with money in both pockets—he takes up his rents as he comes down, Mick—think of that, my old friend."

"Weel for them that have rents to take up," said Meiklewham ; "ours are lying rather ower low to be lifted at present.—But are you sure this Earl is a man to mell with?—are you sure ye can win of him, and that if you do, he can pay his losings, Mr Mowbray?—because I have kend mony ane come for wool, and gang hame shorn ; and though ye are a clever young gentleman—and I am bound to suppose ye ken as much about life as most folk, and all that—yet some gate or other ye have aye come off at the losing hand, as ye have ower much reason to ken this day—howbeit——"

"Oh, the devil take your gossip, my dear Mick ! If you can give no help, spare drowning me with your pother.—Why, man, I was a fresh hand—had my apprentice-fees to pay—and these are no trifles, Mick.—But what of that?—I am free of the company now, and can trade on my own bottom."

"Aweel, aweel, I wish it may be sae," said Meiklewham.

"It will be so, and it shall be so, my trusty friend," replied Mowbray, cheerily, "so you will but help me to the stock to trade with."

"The stock?—what d'ye ca' the stock? I ken nae stock that ye have left."

"But *you* have plenty, my old boy—Come, sell out a few of your three per cents ; I will pay difference—interest—exchange—everything."

"Ay, ay—everything or naething," answered Meiklewham ; "but as you are sae very pressing, I hae been thinking—Whan is the siller wanted?"

"This instant—this day—to-morrow at farthest !" exclaimed the proposed borrower.

"Wh—ew !" whistled the lawyer, with a long prolongation of the note ; "the thing is impossible."

"It must be, Mick, for all that," answered Mr Mowbray, who knew by experience that *impossible*, when uttered by his accommodating

friend in this tone, meant only, when interpreted, extremely difficult and very expensive.

"Then it must be by Miss Clara selling her stock, now that ye speak of stock," said Meiklewham; "I wonder ye didna think of this before."

"I wish you had been dumb rather than that you had mentioned now," said Mowbray, starting, as if stung by an adder—"What, Clara's pittance!—the trifle my aunt left her for her own fanciful expenses—her own little private store, that she puts to so many good purposes—Poor Clara, that has so little!—And why not rather our own, Master Meiklewham, who call yourself the friend and servant of our family?"

"Ay, St Ronan's," answered Meiklewham, "that is a' very true—'t service is nae inheritance; and as for friendship, it begins at me, as wise folks have said lang before our time. And for that matter, I think they that are nearest sib should take maist risk. You are nearer and dearer to your sister, St Ronan's, than you are poor Saunders Meiklewham, that hasna sae muckle gentle blood would supper up a hungry flea."

"I will not do this," said St Ronan's, walking up and down with much agitation; for, selfish as he was, he loved his sister, and loved her the more on account of those peculiarities which rendered his protection indispensable to her comfortable existence—"I will not," he said, "pillage her, come on't what will. I will rather go a volunteer to the Continent, and die like a gentleman."

He continued to pace the room in a moody silence, which began to disturb his companion, who had not been hitherto accustomed to see his patron take matters so deeply. At length he made an attempt to attract the attention of the silent and sullen ponderer.

"Mr Mowbray"—no answer—"I was saying, St Ronan's"—still no reply. "I have been thinking about this matter—and——"

"And *what*, sir?" said St Ronan's, stopping short, and speaking in a stern tone of voice.

"And to speak truth, I see little feasibility in the matter ony way; if ye had the siller in your pocket to-day, it would be a' in the curl of Etherington's the morn."

"Pshaw! you are a fool," answered Mowbray.

"That is not unlikely," said Meiklewham; "but so is Sir Bingo Binks, and yet he's had the better of you, St Ronan's, this twa or three times."

"It is false!—he has not," answered St Ronan's, fiercely.

"Weel I wot," resumed Meiklewham, "he took you in about the common fish, and some other wager ye lost to him this very day."

"I tell you once more, Meiklewham, you are a fool, and no more to my trim than you are to the longitude—Bingo is got shy—I'll just give him a little line, that is all—then I shall strike him to the pose—I am as sure of him as I am of the other—I know the fly will both rise to—this cursed want of five hundred will do me of ten thousand!"

"If you are so certain of being the bangster—so very certain, I an, of sweeping stakes—what harm will Miss Clara come to by

your having the use of her siller? You can make it up to her for the risk ten times told."

"And so I can, by Heaven!" said St Ronan's. "Mick, you are right, and I am a scrupulous, chicken-hearted fool. Clara shall have a thousand for her poor five hundred—she shall, by——. And I will carry her to Edinburgh for a season, or perhaps to London, and we will have the best advice for her case, and the best company to divert her. And if they think her a little odd—why, d—n me, I am her brother, and will bear her through it. Yes—yes—you're right there can be no hurt in borrowing five hundred of her for a few days when such profit may be made on't, both for her and me.—Here, fill the glasses, my old boy, and drink success to it, for you are right."

"Here is success to it, with all my heart," answered Meiklewham heartily glad to see his patron's sanguine temper arrive at this desirable conclusion, and yet willing to hedge in his own credit; "but it is *you* are right, and not *me*, for I advise nothing except on your assurances, that you can make your ain of this English earl, and of this Sir Bingo—and if you can but do that, I am sure it would be unwise and unkind in any one of your friends to stand in your light."

"True, Mick, true," answered Mowbray.—"And yet dice and cards are but bones and pasteboard, and the best horse ever started may slip a shoulder before he get to the winning-post—and so I wish Clara's venture had not been in such a bottom.—But, hang it, can I kill a cat—I can hedge as well as any one, if the odds turn up against me—so let us have the cash, Mick."

"Aha! but there go two words to that bargain—the stock stands in my name and Tam Turnpenny the banker's, as trustees for Miss Clara—Now, get you her letter to us, desiring us to sell out and to pay you the proceeds, and Tam Turnpenny will let you have five hundred pounds *instantly*, on the faith of the transaction; for I fancy you would desire a' the stock to be sold out, and it will produce more than six hundred, or seven hundred pounds either—and I reckon you will be selling out the whole—it's needless making twa bites of a cherry."

"True," answered Mowbray; "since we must be rogues, or something like it, let us make it worth our while at least; so give me the form of the letter, and Clara shall copy it—that is, if she consents for you know she can keep her own opinion as well as any other woman in the world."

"And that," said Meiklewham, "is as the wind will keep its way preach to it as you like. But if I might advise about Miss Clara—wad say naething mair than that I was stressed for the penny money for I mistake her muckle if she would like to see you ganging pitch and toss wi' this lord and tither baronet for her aunt's three per cents—I ken she has some queer notions—she gies away the fees of the dividends on that very stock in downright charity."

"And I am in hazard to rob the poor as well as my sister!" said Mowbray, filling once more his own glass and his friend's. "Come, Mick, no skylights—here is Clara's health—she is an angel—and I am—what I will not call myself, and suffer no other man to call me,

at I shall win this time—I am sure I shall, since Clara's fortune depends upon it."

"Now, I think, on the other hand," said Meiklewham, "that if anything should chance wrang (and Heaven kens that the best laid schemes will gang agee), it will be a great comfort to think that the timinate losers will only be the poor folk, that have the parish between them and absolute starvation—if your sister spent her ainler, it would be a very different story."

"Hush, Mick—for God's sake, hush, mine honest friend," said Mowbray; "it is quite true; thou art a rare counsellor in time of need, and hast as happy a manner of reconciling a man's conscience with his necessities, as might set up a score of casuists; but beware, my most zealous counsellor and confessor, how you drive the nail too close—I promise you some of the chaffing you are at just now rather rates my pluck.—Well, give me your scroll—I will to Clara with it though I 'would rather meet the best shot in Britain, with ten acres of green sod betwixt us." So saying, he left the apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

FRATERNAL LOVE.

Nearest of blood should still be next in love;
And when I see these happy children playing,
While William gathers flowers for Ellen's ringlets,
And Ellen dresses flies for William's angle,
I scarce can think that in advancing life,
Coldness, unkindness, interest, or suspicion,
Will e'er divide that unity so sacred,
Which Nature bound at birth.

Anonymous.

WHEN Mowbray had left his dangerous adviser, in order to steer the course which his agent had indicated, without offering to recommend it, he went to the little parlour which his sister was wont to term her own, and in which she spent great part of her time. It was fitted up with a sort of fanciful neatness; and in its perfect arrangement and good order, formed a strong contrast to the other apartments of the old and neglected mansion-house. A number of the articles lay on the work-table, indicating the elegant, and, at the same time, the unsettled turn of the inhabitant's mind. There were unfinished drawings, blotted music, needle-work of various kinds, and many other little female tasks; all undertaken with zeal, and so far prosecuted with art and elegance, but all flung aside before any one of them was completed.

Clara herself sat upon a little low couch by the window, reading, at least turning over the leaves of a book, in which she seemed to be absorbed. But instantly starting up when she saw her brother, she ran towards him with the most cordial cheerfulness.

"Welcome, welcome, my dear John; this is very kind of you to

come to visit your recluse sister. I have been trying to nail my eyes and my understanding to a stupid book here, because they say too much thought is not quite good for me. But, either the man's dulness, or my want of the power of attending, makes my eyes pass over the page, just as one seems to read in a dream, without being able to comprehend one word of the matter. You shall talk to me and that will do better. What can I give you to show that you are welcome? I am afraid tea is all I have to offer, and that you set too little store by."

"I shall be glad of a cup at present," said Mowbray, "for I wish to speak with you."

"Then Jessy shall make it ready instantly," said Miss Mowbray ringing, and giving orders to her waiting-maid—"but you must not be ungrateful, John, and plague me with any of the ceremonial for your fête—'sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' I will attend and play my part as prettily as you can desire; but to think of it beforehand, would make both my head and my heart ache; and so I beg you will spare me on the subject."

"Why, you wild kitten," said Mowbray, "you turn every day more shy of human communication—we shall have you take the woods one day, and become as savage as the Princess Caraboo. But I will plague you about nothing if I can help it. If matters go not smooth on the great day, they must e'en blame the dull thick head that had no fair lady to help him in his need. But, Clara, I have something more material to say to you—something indeed of the last importance."

"What is it?" said Clara, in a tone of voice approaching to a scream—"In the name of God, what is it? You know not how you terrify me!"

"Nay, you start at a shadow, Clara," answered her brother. "It is no such uncommon matter neither—good faith, it is the most common distress in the world, so far as I know the world—I am sorely pinched for money."

"Is that all?" replied Clara, in a tone which seemed to her brother as much to underrate the difficulty, when it was explained as her fears had exaggerated it before she heard its nature.

"Is that all? Indeed it is all, and comprehends a great deal of vexation. I shall be hard run unless I can get a certain sum of money—and I must e'en ask you if you can help me?"

"Help you?" replied Clara; "yes, with all my heart—but you know my purse is a light one—more than half of my last dividend is in it, however, and I am sure, John, I shall be happy if I can serve you—especially as that will at least show that your wants are but small ones."

"Alas, Clara, if you would help me," said her brother, half repentant of his purpose, "you must draw the neck of the goose which lays the golden eggs—you must lend me the whole stock."

"And why not, John," said the simple-hearted girl, "if it will do you a kindness? Are you not my natural guardian? Are you not a kind one? And is not my little fortune entirely at your disposal? You will, I am sure, do all for the best."

"I fear I may not," said Mowbray, starting from her, and more stressed by her sudden and unsuspecting compliance, than he would have been by difficulties or remonstrance. In the latter case, he could have stifled the pangs of conscience amid the manœuvres which he must have resorted to for obtaining her acquiescence; as matters stood, there was all the difference between slaughtering a tame and unresisting animal, and pursuing wild game, until the exhaustion of the sportsman's exertions overcomes the internal sense of his own cruelty. The same idea occurred to Mowbray himself.

"By G—," he said, "this is like shooting the bird sitting.—Alas," he added, "I fear this money will scarce be employed as you would wish."

"Employ it as you yourself please, my dearest brother," she replied, "and I will believe it is all for the best."

"Nay, I am doing for the best," he replied; "at least, I am doing what must be done, for I see no other way through it—so all you have to do is to copy this paper, and bid adieu to bank dividends—for a little while at least. I trust soon to double this little matter for you, if Fortune will but stand my friend."

"Do not trust to Fortune, John," said Clara, smiling, though with an expression of deep melancholy. "Alas! she has never been a friend to our family—not at least for many a day."

"She favours the bold, say my old grammatical exercises," answered her brother; "and I must trust her, were she as changeable as a weathercock.—And yet—if she should jilt me!—What will you say, Clara, if I am unable, contrary to my hope, expectation, and expectation, to repay you this money within a short time?"

"Do?" replied Clara; "I must do without it, you know; and for my part, I will not say a word."

"True," replied Mowbray, "but your little expenses—your charities—your halt and blind—your round of paupers?"

"Well, I can manage all that too. Look you here, John, how many half-worked trifles there are. The needle or the pencil is the source of all distressed heroines, you know; and I promise you, though I have been a little idle and unsettled of late, yet when I do think about it, no Emmeline or Ethelinde of them all ever sent such loads of trumpery to market as I shall, or made such wealth as I shall do. I daresay Lady Penelope, and all the gentry at the Well, will purchase, and will raffle, and do all sorts of things to encourage the pensive performer. I will send them such lots of landscapes with sap-green trees, and mazareen-blue rivers, and portraits that will terrify the originals themselves—and handkerchiefs and turbans, and needlework scalloped exactly like the walks on the Belvidere—by, I shall become a little fortune in the first season."

"No, Clara," said John, gravely, for a virtuous resolution had gained the upper hand in his bosom, while his sister ran on in this manner.—"We will do something better than all this. If this kind of yours does not fetch me through, I am determined I will cut my whole concern. It is but standing a laugh or two, and hearing a fellow say, Damme, Jack, are you turned clodhopper at last!—that is the worst. Dogs, horses, and all, shall go to the hammer;

we will keep nothing but your pony, and I will trust to a pair of excellent legs. There is enough left of the old acres to keep us in the way you like best, and that I will learn to like. I will work in the garden, and work in the forest, mark my own trees, and cut them myself, keep my own accounts, and send Saunders Meiklewham to the devil."

"That last is the best resolution of all, John," said Clara; "and if such a day should come round, I should be the happiest of living creatures—I should not have a grief left in the world—if I had, you should never see or hear of it—it should lie here," she said, pressing her hand on her bosom, "buried as deep as a funereal urn in a cold sepulchre. Oh! could we not begin such a life to-morrow? If it is absolutely necessary that this trifle of money should be got rid of first, throw it into the river, and think you have lost it amongst gamblers and horse-jockeys."

Clara's eyes, which she fondly fixed on her brother's face, glowed through the tears which her enthusiasm called into them, while she thus addressed him. Mowbray, on his part, kept his looks fixed on the ground, with a flush on his cheek, that expressed at once false pride and real shame.

At length he looked up. "My dear girl," he said, "how foolishly you talk, and how foolishly I, that have twenty things to do, stand here listening to you! All will go smooth on *my* plan—if it should not, we have yours in reserve, and I swear to you I will adopt it. The trifle which this letter of yours enables me to command, may have luck in it, and we must not throw up the cards while we have a chance of the game.—Were I to cut from this moment, these few hundreds would make us little better or little worse—so you see we have two strings to our bow. Luck is sometimes against me, that is true—but upon true principle, and playing on the square, I can manage the best of them, or my name is not Mowbray. Adieu, my dearest Clara." So saying, he kissed her cheek with a more than usual degree of affection.

Ere he could raise himself from his stooping posture, she threw her arm kindly over his neck, and said with a tone of the deepest interest, "My dearest brother, your slightest wish has been, and ever shall be, a law to me—Oh! if you would but grant me one request in return!"

"What is it, you silly girl?" said Mowbray, gently disengaging himself from her hold.—"What is it you can have to ask that needs such a solemn preface?—Remember, I hate prefaces; and when I happen to open a book, always skip them."

"Without preface, then, my dearest brother, will you, for my sake, avoid those quarrels in which the people yonder are eternally engaged? I never go down there but I hear of some new brawl, and I never lay my head down to sleep, but I dream that you are the victim of it. Even last night——"

"Nay, Clara, if you begin to tell your dreams, we shall never have done. Sleeping, to be sure, is the most serious employment of your life—for as to eating, you hardly match a sparrow; but I entreat you to sleep without dreaming, or to keep your visions to yourself.—Why do you keep such fast hold of me?—What on earth can you be afraid

?—Surely you do not think the blockhead Binks, or any other of the good folks below yonder, dared to turn on me? Egad, I wish they would pluck up a little mettle, that I might have an excuse for killing them. Gad, I would soon teach them to follow at heel.”

“No, John,” replied his sister; “it is not of such men as these that I have any fear—and yet, cowards are sometimes driven to desperation, and become more dangerous than better men—but it is not such as these that I fear. But there are men in the world whose qualities are beyond their seeming—whose spirit and courage lie hidden, like metals in the mine, under an unmarked or a plain exterior.—You may meet with such—you are rash and headlong, and not to exercise your wit without always weighing consequences, and us——”

“On my word, Clara,” answered Mowbray, “you are in a most harmonising humour this morning! the parson himself could not have been more logical or profound. You have only to divide your discourse into heads, and garnish it with conclusions for use, and conclusions for doctrine, and it might be preached before a whole presbytery, with every chance of instruction and edification. But I am a man of the world, my little Clara; and though I wish to go in Bath’s way as little as possible, I must not fear the raw-head and bloody-bones neither.—And who the devil is to put the question to me?—I must know that, Clara, for you have some especial person in your eye when you bid me take care of quarrelling.”

Clara could not become paler than was her usual complexion; but her voice faltered as she eagerly assured her brother that she had no particular person in her thoughts.

“Clara,” said her brother, “do you remember, when there was a report of a bogle¹ in the upper orchard, when we were both children?—Do you remember how you were perpetually telling me to take care of the bogle, and keep away from its haunts?—And do you remember my going on purpose to detect the bogle, finding the coward, with a shirt about him, busied in pulling pears, and treating me to a handsome drubbing?—I am the same Jack Mowbray still, ready to face danger and unmask imposition; and your fears, Clara, will only make me watch more closely, till I find out the real object of them. If you warn me of quarrelling with some one, it must be because you know some one who is not unlikely to quarrel with me. You are a flighty and fanciful girl, but you have sense enough not to trouble either yourself or me on a point of honour, save when there is some good reason for it.”

Clara once more protested, and it was with the deepest anxiety to be believed, that what she had said arose only out of the general consequences which she apprehended from the line of conduct her brother had adopted, and which, in her apprehension, was so likely to engage him in the broils that divided the good company at the spring. Mowbray listened to her explanation with an air of doubt, rather incredulity, sipped a cup of tea which had for some time been placed before him; and at length replied, “Well, Clara,

¹ Bogle—in English, Goblin.

whether I am right or wrong in my guess, it would be cruel to torment you any more, remembering what you have just done for me. But do justice to your brother, and believe, that when you have anything to ask of him, an explicit declaration of your wishes will answer your purpose much better than any ingenious oblique attempts to influence me. Give up all thoughts of such, my dear Clara—you are but a poor manœuvrer, but were you the very Machiavel of your sex you should not turn the flank of John Mowbray.”

He left the room as he spoke, and did not return, though his sister twice called upon him. It is true that she uttered the word brother so faintly, that perhaps the sound did not reach his ears.—“He is gone,” she said, “and I have had no power to speak out! I am like the wretched creatures, who, it is said, lie under a potent charm, that prevents them alike from shedding tears and from confessing their crimes—Yes, there is a spell on this unhappy heart, and either that must be dissolved, or this must break.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHALLENGE.

A slight note I have about me, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an office which friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, as I desire nothing but right on both sides.

King and no King.

THE intelligent reader may recollect, that Tyrrel departed from the Fox Hotel on terms not altogether so friendly towards the company as those under which he entered it. Indeed, it occurred to him, that he might probably have heard something farther on the subject, though, amidst matters of deeper and more anxious consideration, the idea only passed hastily through his mind; and two days having gone over without any message from Sir Bingo Binks, the whole affair glided entirely out of his memory.

The truth was, that although never old woman took more trouble to collect and blow up with her bellows the embers of her decayed fire, than Captain MacTurk kindly underwent for the purpose of puffing into a flame the dying sparkles of the Baronet's courage, yet two days were spent in fruitless conferences before he could attain the desired point. He found Sir Bingo on these different occasions in all sorts of different moods of mind, and disposed to view the thing in all shades of light, except what the Captain thought was the true one.—He was in a drunken humour—in a sullen humour—in a thoughtless and vilipending humour—in every humour but a fighting one. And when Captain MacTurk talked of the reputation of the company at the Well, Sir Bingo pretended to take offence, said the company might go to the devil, and hinted that he “did them sufficient honour by gracing them with his countenance, but did not

ean to constitute them any judges of his affairs. The fellow was a
ff, and he would have nothing to do with him."

Captain MacTurk would willingly have taken measures against
e Baronet himself, as in a state of contumacy, but was opposed by
interblossom and other members of the committee, who considered
r Bingo as too important and illustrious a member of their society
be rashly expelled from a place not honoured by the residence of
any persons of rank; and finally insisted that nothing should be
one in the matter without the advice of Mowbray, whose prepara-
ns for his solemn festival on the following Thursday had so much
cupied him, that he had not lately appeared at the Well.

In the meanwhile, the gallant Captain seemed to experience as
uch distress of mind as if some stain had lain on his own most
blemished of reputations. He went up and down upon the points
his toes, rising up on his instep with a jerk which at once ex-
pressed vexation and defiance—He carried his nose turned up in the
r, like that of a pig when he snuffs the approaching storm—He
oke in monosyllables when he spoke at all; and—what perhaps
ustrated in the strongest manner the depth of his feelings—he re-
sed, in face of the whole company, to pledge Sir Bingo in a glass
the Baronet's peculiar cogniac.

At length, the whole Well was alarmed by the report brought by
smart outrider, that the young Earl of Etherington, reported to be
sing on the horizon of fashion as a star of the first magnitude, in-
ded to pass an hour, or a day, or a week, as it might happen (for
s lordship could not be supposed to know his own mind), at St
onan's Well.

This suddenly put all in motion. Almanacks were opened to ascer-
in his lordship's age, inquiries were made concerning the extent of
s fortune, his habits were quoted, his tastes were guessed at, and
l that the ingenuity of the Managing Committee could devise was
sorted to, in order to recommend their Spa to this favourite of for-
ne. An express was despatched to Shaws-Castle with the agree-
le intelligence which fired the train of hope that led to Mowbray's
appropriation of his sister's capital. He did not, however, think
proper to obey the summons to the Spring; for, not being aware in
hat light the Earl might regard the worthies there assembled, he
d not desire to be found by his lordship in any strict connection
ith them.

Sir Bingo Binks was in a different situation. The bravery with
hich he had endured the censure of the place, began to give way,
hen he considered that a person of such distinction as that which
ublic opinion attached to Lord Etherington, should find him bodily
deed at St Ronan's, but, so far as society was concerned, on the
oad towards the ancient city of Coventry; and his banishment
ither incurred by that most unpardonable offence in modern moral-
y, a solecism in the code of honour. Though sluggish and inert
hen called to action, the Baronet was by no means an absolute
oward; or, if so, he was of that class which fights when reduced to
xtremity. He manfully sent for Captain MacTurk, who waited
pon him with a grave solemnity of aspect, which instantly was ex-

changed for a radiant joy, when Sir Bingo, in few words, empowered him to carry a message to that d—d strolling artist, by whom he had been insulted three days since.

"By Cot," said the Captain, "my exceedingly goot and excellent friend, and I am happy to do such a favour for you! And it's well you have thought of it yourself; because, if it had not been for some of our very goot and excellent friends, that would be putting their spoon into another folk's dish, I should have been asking you a civil question myself, how you came to dine with us, with all that mud and mire which Mr Tyrrel's grasp has left upon the collar of your coat—you understand me.—But it is much better as it is, and I will go to the man with all the speed of light; and though, to be sure, it should have been sooner thought of, yet let me alone to make an excuse for that, just in my own civil way—better late thrive than never do well, you know, Sir Bingo; and if you have made him wait a little while for his morning, you must give him the better measure, my darling."

So saying, he awaited no reply, lest peradventure the commission with which he was so hastily and unexpectedly charged, should have been clogged with some condition of compromise. No such proposal, however, was made on the part of the doughty Sir Bingo, who eyed his friend as he hastily snatched up his rattan to depart, with a dogged look of obstinacy, expressive, to use his own phrase, of a determined resolution to come up to the scratch; and when he heard the Captain's parting footsteps, and saw the door shut behind him, he valiantly whistled a few bars of Jenny Sutton, in token he cared not a farthing how the matter was to end.

With a swifter pace than his half-pay leisure usually encouraged, or than his habitual dignity permitted, Captain MacTurk cleared the ground betwixt the Spring and its gay vicinity, and the ruins of the Aultoun, where reigned our friend Meg Dods, the sole assertor of its ancient dignities. To the door of the Cleikum Inn the Captain addressed himself, as one too much accustomed to war to fear a rough reception; although at the very first aspect of Meg, who presented her person at the half-opened door, his military experience taught him that his entrance into the place would in all probability be disputed.

"Is Mr Tyrrel at home?" was the question; and the answer was conveyed by the counter-interrogation, "Wha may ye be that speers?"

As the most polite reply to this question, and an indulgence, at the same time, of his own taciturn disposition, the Captain presented to Luckie Dods the fifth part of an ordinary playing-card, much grimed with snuff, which bore on its blank side his name and quality. But Luckie Dods rejected the information thus tendered, with contemptuous scorn.

"Nane of your deil's play-books for me," said she; "it's an ill world since prick-my-dainty doings came in fashion—It's a poor tongue that canna tell its ain name, and I'll hae nane of your scarts upon pasteboard."

"I am Captain MacTurk, of the ——— regiment," said the Captain, disdaining farther answer.

"MacTurk?" repeated Meg, with an emphasis which induced the owner of the name to reply, "Yes, honest woman—MacTurk—Factor MacTurk—have you any objections to my name, good wife?"

"Nae objections have I," answered Meg; "its e'en an excellent name for a heathen.—But, Captain MacTurk, since sae it be that ye are a captain, ye may e'en face about and march your ways hame again, to the tune of Dumbarton Drums; for ye are ganging to have the speech of Maister Tirl, or ony lodger of mine."

"And wherefore not?" demanded the veteran; "and is this of your own foolish head, honest woman, or has your lodger left such orders?"

"Maybe he has, and maybe no," answered Meg, sturdily; "and I ken nae mair right that ye suld ca' me honest woman, than I have to ca' you honest man, whilk is as far frae my thoughts as it wad be from heaven's truth."

"The woman is deleerit!" said Captain MacTurk; "but coom, coom—a gentleman is not to be misused in this way when he comes on a gentleman's business; so make you a bit room on the doorstane, that I may pass by you, or I will make room for myself, by Cot, to our small pleasure."

And so saying, he assumed the air of a man who was about to make good his passage. But Meg, without deigning farther reply, flourished around her head the hearth-broom, which she had been employing to its more legitimate purpose when disturbed in her housewifery by Captain MacTurk.

"I ken your errand weel enough, Captain—and I ken yersell. Ye are one of the folk that gang about yonder, setting folks by the lugs, as callants set their colliers to fight. But ye sall come to nae lodger of mine, let a-bee Maister Tirl, wi' ony sic ungodly errand; for I am one that will keep God's peace and the King's within my dwelling."

So saying, and in explicit token of her peaceable intentions, she again flourished her broom.

The veteran instinctively threw himself under St George's guard, and drew two paces back, exclaiming "that the woman was either mad or as drunk as whisky could make her;" an alternative which afforded Meg so little satisfaction, that she fairly rushed on her retiring adversary, and began to use her weapon to fell purpose.

"Me drunk, ye scandalous blackguard!" (a blow with the broom interposed as parenthesis)—"me, that am fasting from all but sin and ohea!" (another whack).

The Captain, swearing, exclaiming, and parrying, caught the blows as they fell, showing much dexterity in single-stick. The people began to gather; and how long his gallantry might have maintained itself against the spirit of self-defence and revenge must be left uncertain, for the arrival of Tyrrel, returned from a short walk, put a period to the contest.

Meg, who had a great respect for her guest, began to feel ashamed of her own violence, and slunk into the house; observing, however, that she trowed she had made her hearth-broom and the auld hea-

then's pow right weel acquainted. The tranquillity which ensued upon her departure, gave Tyrrel an opportunity to ask the Captain, whom he at length recognised, the meaning of this singular affray, and whether the visit was intended for him; to which the veteran replied very discomposedly, that "he should have known that long enough ago, if he had had decent people to open his door, and answer a civil question, instead of a flyting madwoman, who was worse than an eagle," he said, "or a mastiff-bitch, or a she-bear, or any other female beast in the creation."

Half suspecting his errand, and desirous to avoid unnecessary notoriety, Tyrrel, as he showed the Captain to the parlour which he called his own, entreated him to excuse the rudeness of his landlady, and to pass from the topic to that which had procured him the honour of this visit.

"And you are right, my good Master Tyrrel," said the Captain, pulling down the sleeves of his coat, adjusting his handkerchief and breast-ruffle, and endeavouring to recover the composure of manner becoming his mission, but still adverting indignantly to the usage he had received.—"By —, if she had but been a man, if it were the King himself—However, Mr Tyrrel, I am come on a civil errand—and very civilly I have been treated—the auld bitch should be set in the stocks, and be tamned!—My friend, Sir Bingo—By —, I shall never forget that woman's insolence—if there be a constable or a cat-o'-nine tails within ten miles——"

"I perceive, Captain," said Tyrrel, "that you are too much disturbed at this moment to enter upon the business which has brought you here—if you will step into my bedroom, and make use of some cold water and a towel, it will give you the time to compose yourself a little."

"I shall do no such thing, Mr Tyrrel," answered the Captain, snappishly; "I do not want to be composed at all, and I do not want to stay in this house a minute longer than to do my errand to you on my friend's behalf—And as for this tamned woman, Dods——"

"You will in that case forgive my interrupting you, Captain Mac-Turk, as I presume your errand to me can have no reference to this strange quarrel with my landlady, with which I have nothing to——"

"And if I thought that it had, sir," said the Captain, interrupting Tyrrel in his turn, "you should have given me satisfaction before you was a quarter of an hour older—Oh, I would give five pounds to the pretty fellow that would say, Captain MacTurk, the woman did right!"

"I certainly will not be that person you wish for, Captain," replied Tyrrel, "because I really do not know who was in the right or wrong; but I am certainly sorry that you should have met with ill usage, when your purpose was to visit me."

"Well, sir, if you are concerned," said the man of peace, snappishly, "so am I, and there is an end of it.—And touching my errand to you—you cannot have forgotten that you treated my friend, Sir Bingo Binks, with singular incivility?"

"I recollect nothing of the kind, Captain," replied Tyrrel. "I remember that the gentleman so called, took some uncivil liberties in laying foolish bets concerning me, and that I treated him, from respect to the rest of the company, and the ladies in particular, with a great degree of moderation and forbearance."

"And you must have very fine ideas of forbearance," replied the Captain, "when you took my good friend by the collar of the coat, and lifted him out of your way as if he had been a puppy dog. My good Mr Tyrrel, I can assure you he does not think that you have borne him at all, and he has no purpose to forbear you; and I must either carry back a sufficient apology, or you must meet in a quiet way, with a good friend on each side.—And this was the errand I came on, when this tanned woman, with the hearth-broom, who is an enemy to all quiet and peaceable proceedings——"

"We will forget Mrs Dods for the present, if you please, Captain MacTurk," said Tyrrel—"and, to speak to the present subject, you will permit me to say that I think this summons comes a little of the latest. You know best as a military man, but I have always understood that such differences are usually settled immediately after they occur—not that I intend to baulk Sir Bingo's inclinations upon the score of delay, or any other account."

"I daresay you will not—I daresay you will not, Mr Tyrrel," answered the Captain—"I am free to think that you know better what belongs to a gentleman.—And as to time—look you, my good sir, there are different sorts of people in this world, as there are different sorts of firearms. There are your hair-triggered rifles, that go off just at the right moment, and in the twinkling of an eye, and that, Mr Tyrrel, is your true man of honour;—and there is a sort of person that takes a thing up too soon, and sometimes backs out of it, like your rubbishy Birmingham pieces, that will at one time go off at half-cock, and at another time burn priming without going off at all;—then again there are pieces that hang fire—or I should rather say, what are like the matchlocks which the black fellows use in the East Indies—there must be some blowing of the match, and so forth, which occasions delay, but the piece carries true enough after all."

"And your friend Sir Bingo's valour is of this last kind, Captain—I presume that is the inference. I should have thought it more like a boy's cannon, which is fired by means of a train, and is but a pop-gun after all."

"I cannot allow of such comparisons, sir," said the Captain; "you will understand that I come here as Sir Bingo's friend, and a reflection on him will be an affront to me."

"I disclaim all intended offence to you, Captain—I have no wish to extend the number of my adversaries, or to add to them the name of a gallant officer like yourself," replied Tyrrel.

"You are too obliging, sir," said the Captain, drawing himself up with dignity. "By ——, and that was said very handsomely!—Well, sir, and shall I not have the pleasure of carrying back any explanation from you to Sir Bingo?—I assure you it would give me pleasure to make this matter handsomely up."

"To Sir Bingo, Captain MacTurk, I have no apology to offer

—I think I treated him more gently than his impertinence deserved."

"Och, och!" sighed the Captain, with a strong Highland intonation; "then there is no more to be said, but just to settle time and place; for pistols, I suppose, must be the weapons."

"All these matters are quite the same to me," said Tyrrel; "only in respect of time, I should wish it to be as speedy as possible—What say you to one, afternoon, this very day?—You may name the place."

"At one, afternoon," replied the Captain, deliberately. "Sir Bingo will attend you—the place may be the Buck-stane; for as the whole company go to the water-side to-day to eat a kettle of fish,¹ there will be no risk of interruption.—And whom shall I speak to, my good friend, on your side of the quarrel?"

"Really, Captain," replied Tyrrel, "that is a puzzling question—I have no friend here—I suppose you could hardly act for both?"

"It would be totally, absolutely, and altogether out of the question, my good friend," replied MacTurk. "But if you will trust to me, I will bring up a friend on your part from the Well, who, though you have hardly seen him before, will settle matters for you as well as if you had been intimate for twenty years—and I will bring up the Doctor too, if I can get him unloosed from the petticoat of that fat widow Blower, that he has strung himself upon."

"I have no doubt you will do everything with perfect accuracy, Captain. At one o'clock, then, we meet at the Buck-stane—Stay, permit me to see you to the door."

"By —, and it is not altogether so unnecessary," said the Captain; "for the tanned woman with the besom might have some advantage in that long dark passage, knowing the ground better than I do—tann her, I will have amends on her, if there be whipping-post, or ducking-stool, or a pair of stocks in the parish!" And so saying, the Captain trudged off, his spirits ever and anon agitated by recollection of the causeless aggression of Meg Dods, and again composed to a state of happy serenity by the recollection of the agreeable arrangement which he had made between Mr Tyrrel and his friend Sir Bingo Binks.

We have heard of men of undoubted benevolence of character and disposition, whose principal delight was to see a miserable criminal, degraded alike by his previous crimes and the sentence which he had incurred, conclude a vicious and wretched life by an ignominious and painful death. It was some such inconsistency of character which induced honest Captain MacTurk, who had really been a meritorious officer, and was a good-natured, honourable, and well-intentioned man, to place his chief delight in setting his friends by the ears, and then acting as umpire in the dangerous rencontres, which, according to his code of honour, were absolutely necessary to restore peace and cordiality. We leave the explanation of such anomalies to the labours of craniologists, for they seem to defy all the researches of the Ethic philosopher.

¹ See Note C. *Kettle of Fish.*

CHAPTER XIII.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Evans. I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for Master Caius?

Slender. Marry, Sir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way; Old Windsor way, and every way.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

SIR BINGO BINKS received the Captain's communication with the same dogged sullenness he had displayed at sending the challenge; most ungracious *humph*, ascending, as it were, from the very bottom of his stomach, through the folds of a Belcher handkerchief, intimating his acquiescence, in a tone nearly as gracious as that with which the drowsy traveller acknowledges the intimation of the slipshod ostler, that it is on the stroke of five, and the horn will sound in a minute. Captain MacTurk by no means considered this ejaculation as expressing a proper estimate of his own trouble and services. "Humph!" he replied; "and what does that mean, Sir Bingo? Have not I here had the trouble to put you just into the great road; and would you have been able to make a handsome affair out of it at all, after you had let it hang so long in the wind, if I had not taken on myself to make it agreeable to the gentleman, and looked as neat a mess out of it as I have seen a Frenchman do out of a stale sprat?"

Sir Bingo saw it was necessary to mutter some intimation of acquiescence and acknowledgment, which, however inarticulate, was sufficient to satisfy the veteran to whom the adjustment of a personal affair of this kind was a labour of love, and who now, kindly mindful of his promise to Tyrrel, hurried away as if he had been about the most charitable action upon earth, to secure the attendance of some one as a witness on the stranger's part.

Mr Winterblossom was the person whom MacTurk had in his own mind pitched upon as the fittest person to perform this act of benevolence, and he lost no time in communicating his wish to that worthy gentleman. But Mr Winterblossom, though a man of the world, and well enough acquainted with such matters, was by no means so passionately addicted to them as was the man of peace, Captain Hector MacTurk. As a *bon vivant*, he hated trouble of any kind, and the shrewd selfishness of his disposition enabled him to foresee that a good deal might accrue to all concerned in the course of this business. He therefore coolly replied, that he knew nothing of Mr Tyrrel—not even whether he was a gentleman or not; and besides, he had received no regular application in his behalf—he did not, therefore, feel himself at all inclined to go to the field as his second. This refusal drove the poor Captain to despair. He conjured his friend to be more public-spirited, and entreated him to consider the reputation of the Well, which was to them as a common country, and the honour of the company to which they both belonged,

and of which Mr Winterblossom was in a manner the proper representative, as being, with consent of all, the perpetual president. He reminded him how many quarrels had been nightly undertaken and departed from on the ensuing morning, without any suitable consequences—said, “that people began to talk of the place oddly; and that, for his own part, he found his own honour so nearly touched, that he had begun to think he himself would be obliged to bring somebody or other to account for the general credit of the Well; and now, just when the most beautiful occasion had arisen to put everything on a handsome footing, it was hard—it was cruel—it was most unjustifiable—in Mr Winterblossom, to decline so simple a matter as was requested of him.”

Dry and taciturn as the Captain was on all ordinary occasions, he proved, on the present, eloquent and almost pathetic; for the tears came into his eyes when he recounted the various quarrels which had become addled, notwithstanding his best endeavours, to hatch them into an honourable meeting; and here was one, at length, just chipping the shell, like to be smothered for want of the most ordinary concession on the part of Winterblossom. In short, that gentleman could not hold out any longer. “It was,” he said, “a very foolish business, he thought; but to oblige Sir Bingo and Captain MacTurk, he had no objection to walk with them about noon as far as the Buckstane, although he must observe the day was hazy, and he had felt a prophetic twinge or two, which looked like a visit of his old acquaintance podagra.”

“Never mind that, my excellent friend,” said the Captain, “a sup out of Sir Bingo’s flask is like enough to put that to rights; and by my soul, it is not the thing he is like to leave behind him on this sort of occasion, unless I be far mistaken in my man.”

“But,” said Winterblossom, “although I comply with your wishes thus far, Captain MacTurk, I by no means undertake for certain to back this same Master Tyrrel, of whom I know nothing at all, but only agree to go to the place in hopes of preventing mischief.”

“Never fash your beard about that, Mr Winterblossom,” replied the Captain; “for a little mischief, as you call it, is become a thing absolutely necessary to the credit of the place; and I am sure, whatever be the consequences, they cannot in the present instance be very fatal to anybody; for here is a young fellow that, if he should have a misfortune, nobody will miss, for nobody knows him; then there is Sir Bingo, whom everybody knows so well, that they will miss him all the less.”

“And there will be Lady Bingo, a wealthy and handsome young widow,” said Winterblossom, throwing his hat upon his head with the grace and pretension of former days, and sighing to see, as he looked in the mirror, how much time, that had whitened his hair, rounded his stomach, wrinkled his brow, and bent down his shoulders, had disqualified him, as he expressed it, “for entering for such a plate.”

Secure of Winterblossom, the Captain’s next anxiety was to obtain the presence of Dr Quackleben, who, although he wrote himself M.D., did not by any means decline practice as a surgeon when any

offered for which he was likely to be well paid, as was warranted in the present instance, the wealthy Baronet being a party principally concerned. The Doctor, therefore, like the eagle scenting the carnage, seized, at the first word, the huge volume of morocco leather which formed his case of portable instruments, and uncoiled before the Captain, with ostentatious display, its formidable and glittering contents, upon which he began to lecture as upon a copious and interesting text, until the man of war thought it necessary to give him a word of caution.

"Och," says he, "I do pray you, Doctor, to carry that packet of yours under the breast of your coat, or in your pocket, or somewhere out of sight, and by no means to produce or open it before the parties. For although scalpels, and tourniquets, and pincers, and the like, are very ingenious implements, and pretty to behold, and are also useful when time and occasion call for them, yet I have known the sight of them take away a man's fighting stomach, and lose their owner a job, Dr Quackleben."

"By my faith, Captain MacTurk," said the Doctor, "you speak as you were graduated!—I have known these treacherous articles play their master many a cursed trick. The very sight of my forps, without the least effort on my part, once cured an inveterate toothache of three days' duration, prevented the extraction of a carious molendinar, which it was the very end of their formation to achieve, and sent me home minus a guinea.—But hand me that greatcoat, Captain, and we will place the instruments in ambush, until they are called into action in due time. I should think something will happen—Sir Bingo is a sure shot at a moor-cock."

"Cannot say," replied MacTurk; "I have known the pistol shake any a hand that held the fowling-piece fast enough. Yonder Tyrrel looks like a teevilish cool customer—I watched him the whole time I was delivering my errand, and I can promise you he is mettle to the back-bone."

"Well—I will have my bandages ready *secundum artem*," replied the man of medicine. "We must guard against hæmorrhage—Sir Bingo is a plethoric subject.—One o'clock, you say—at the Buck-stane—I will be punctual."

"Will you not walk with us?" said Captain MacTurk, who seemed willing to keep his whole convoy together on this occasion, lest, peradventure, any of them had fled from under his patronage.

"No," replied the Doctor, "I must first make an apology to worthy Mrs Blower, for I had promised her my arm down to the river-side, where they are all to eat a kettle of fish."

"By Cot, and I hope we shall make them a prettier kettle of fish than was ever seen at St Ronan's," said the Captain, rubbing his hands.

"Don't say *we*, Captain," replied the cautious Doctor; "I for one have nothing to do with the meeting—wash my hands of it. No, no, cannot afford to be clapt up as accessory.—You ask me to meet you at the Buck-stane—no purpose assigned—I am willing to oblige your worthy friend, Captain MacTurk—walk that way, thinking of nothing particular—hear the report of pistols—hasten to the spot—

fortunately just in time to prevent the most fatal consequences—chance most opportunely to have my case of instruments with me, indeed, generally walk with them about me—*nunquam non paratus*—then give my professional definition of the wound and state of the patient. That is the way to give evidence, Captain, before sheriffs, coroners, and such sort of folks—never commit oneself—it is a rule of our profession.”

“Well, well, Doctor,” answered the Captain, “you know your own ways best; and so you are but there to give a chance of help in case of accident, all the laws of honour will be fully complied with. But it would be a foul reflection upon me, as a man of honour, if I did not take care that there should be somebody to come in thirdsman between death and my principal.”

At the awful hour of one, afternoon, there arrived upon the appointed spot Captain MacTurk, leading to the field the valorous Sir Bingo, not exactly straining like a greyhound in the slips, but rather looking moody like a butcher’s bull-dog, which knows he must fight since his master bids him. Yet the Baronet showed no outward flinching or abatement of courage, excepting that the tune of Jenny Sutton, which he had whistled without intermission since he left the Hotel, had, during the last half-mile of their walk, sunk into silence although, to look at the muscles of the mouth, projection of the lip and vacancy of the eye, it seemed as if the notes were still passing through his mind, and that he whistled Jenny Sutton in his imagination. Mr Winterblossom came two minutes after this happy pair and the Doctor was equally punctual.

“Upon my soul,” said the former, “this is a mighty silly affair, Sir Bingo, and might, I think, be easily taken up, at less risk to all parties than a meeting of this kind. You should recollect, Sir Bingo, that you have much depending upon your life—you are a married man, Sir Bingo.”

Sir Bingo turned the quid in his mouth, and squirted out the juice in a most coachman-like manner.

“Mr Winterblossom,” said the Captain, “Sir Bingo has in this matter put himself in my hands, and unless you think yourself more able to direct his course than I am, I must frankly tell you that I will be disobliged by your interference. You may speak to your own friend as much as you please; and if you find yourself authorised to make any proposal, I shall be desirous to lend an ear to it on the part of my worthy principal, Sir Bingo. But I will be plain with you that I do not greatly approve of settlements upon the field, though I hope I am a quiet and peaceable man; yet here is our honour to be looked after in the first place; and moreover, I must insist that every proposal for accommodation shall originate with your party or yourself.

“My party?” answered Winterblossom; “why really, though I came hither at your request, Captain MacTurk, yet I must see more of the matter, ere I can fairly pronounce myself second to a man I never saw but once.”

“And perhaps may never see again,” said the Doctor, looking at his watch; “for it is ten minutes past the hour, and here is no Mr Tyrrrel.”

"Hey! what's that you say, Doctor?" said the Baronet, awakened from his apathy.

"He speaks tamned nonsense," said the Captain, pulling out a large, old-fashioned, turnip-shaped implement, with a blackened silver dial-plate. "It is not above three minutes after one by the true time, and I will uphold Mr Tyrrel to be a man of his word—never will a man take a thing more coolly."

"Not more coolly than he takes his walk this way," said the Doctor; "for the hour is as I tell you—remember, I am professional—five pulses to count by the second and half-second—my timepiece must go as true as the sun."

"And I have mounted guard a thousand times by my watch," said the Captain; "and I defy the devil to say that Hector MacTurk did not always discharge his duty to the twentieth part of the fraction of a second—it was my great-grandmother, Lady Killbracklin's, and I will maintain its reputation against any timepiece that ever went upon wheels."

"Well, then, look at your own watch, Captain," said Winterblossom, "for time stands still with no man, and while we speak the hour advances. On my word, I think this Mr Tyrrel intends to outbug us."

"Hey! what's that you say?" said Sir Bingo, once more starting from his sullen reverie.

"I shall not look at my watch upon no such matter," said the Captain; "nor will I any way be disposed to doubt your friend's honour, Mr Winterblossom."

"My friend?" said Mr Winterblossom; "I must tell you once more, Captain, that this Mr Tyrrel is no friend of mine—none in the world. He is your friend, Captain MacTurk; and I own, if he keeps waiting much longer on this occasion, I will be apt to consider his friendship as of very little value."

"And how dare you then say that the man is my friend?" said the Captain, knitting his brows in a most formidable manner.

"Pooh! pooh! Captain," answered Winterblossom, coolly, if not contemptuously—"keep all that for silly boys; I have lived in the world too long either to provoke quarrels, or to care about them. So, serve your fire; it is all thrown away on such an old cock as I am. But I really wish we knew whether this fellow means to come twenty minutes past the hour—I think it is odds that you are bilked, Sir Bingo?"

"Bilked! hey!" cried Sir Bingo; "by Gad, I always thought so—wagered with Mowbray he was a raff—I am had, by Gad. I'll wait no longer than the half hour, by Gad, were he a field-marshal."

"You will be directed in that matter by your friend, if you please, Sir Bingo," said the Captain.

"D—n me if I will," returned the Baronet—"Friend! a pretty errand, to bring me out here on such a fool's errand! I knew the fellow was a raff—but I never thought you, with all your chaff about honour, such a d—d spoon as to bring a message from a fellow who has fled the pit!"

"If you regret so much having come here to no purpose," said the

Captain, in a very lofty tone, "and if you think I have used you like a spoon, as you say, I will have no objection in life to take Mr Tyrrel's place, and serve your occasion, my boy!"

"By ——! and if you like it, you may fire away, and welcome," said Sir Bingo; "and I'll spin a crown for first shot, for I do not understand being brought here for nothing, d—n me!"

"And there was never man alive so ready as I am to give you something to stay your stomach," said the irritable Highlander.

"Oh, fie, gentlemen! fie, fie, fie!" exclaimed the pacific Mr Winterblossom—"For shame, Captain—Out upon you, Sir Bingo, are you mad?—what, principal and second!—the like was never heard of—never."

The parties were in some degree recalled to their more cool recollections by this expostulation, yet continued a short quarter-deck walk to and fro, upon parallel lines, looking at each other sullenly as they passed, and bristling like two dogs who have a mind to quarrel yet hesitate to commence hostilities. During this promenade, also, the perpendicular and erect carriage of the veteran, rising on his toes at every step, formed a whimsical contrast with the heavy loutish shuffle of the bulky Baronet, who had, by dint of practice, very nearly attained that most enviable of all carriages, the gait of a shambling Yorkshire ostler. His coarse spirit was now thoroughly kindled, and like iron, or any other baser metal, which is slow in receiving heat, it retained long the smouldering and angry spirit of resentment that had originally brought him to the place, and now rendered him willing to wreak his uncomfortable feelings upon the nearest object which occurred, since the first purpose of his coming thither was frustrated. In his own phrase, his pluck was up, and finding himself in a fighting humour, he thought it a pity, like Bob Acres, that so much good courage should be thrown away. As, however, that courage, after all, consisted chiefly in ill-humour, and as in the demeanour of the Captain he read nothing deferential or deprecatory of his wrath, he began to listen with more attention to the arguments of Mr Winterblossom, who entreated them not to sully, by private quarrel, the honour they had that day so happily acquired without either blood or risk.

"It was now," he said, "three-quarters of an hour past the time appointed for this person, who calls himself Tyrrel, to meet Sir Bing Binks. Now, instead of standing squabbling here, which serves no purpose, I propose we should reduce to writing the circumstances which attend this affair for the satisfaction of the company at the Well, and that the memorandum shall be regularly attested by our subscriptions; after which, I shall farther humbly propose that it be subjected to the revision of the Committee of Management."

"I object to any revision of a statement to which my name shall be appended," said the Captain.

"Right—very true, Captain," said the complacent Mr Winterblossom; "undoubtedly you know best, and your signature is completely sufficient to authenticate this transaction—however, as it is the most important which has occurred since the Spring was esta-

hed, I propose we shall all sign the *procès verbal*, as I may term

“Leave me out, if you please,” said the Doctor, not much satisfied at both the original quarrel and the by-battle had passed over without any occasion for the offices of a Machaon; “leave me out, if you please; for it does not become me to be ostensibly concerned in any proceedings which have had for their object a breach of the peace. And for the importance of waiting here for an hour, in a fine afternoon, it is my opinion there was a more important service to be done at the Well of St Ronan’s, when I, Quentin Quackleben, M.D., attended Lady Penelope Penfeather of her seventh attack upon the nerves, attended with febrile symptoms.”

“No disparagement to your skill at all, Doctor,” said Mr Winter-ssom: “but I conceive the lesson which this fellow has received will be a great means to prevent improper persons from appearing at the Spring hereafter; and, for my part, I shall move that no one be invited to dine at the table in future, till his name is regularly entered as a member of the company, in the lists at the public room. And I hope both Sir Bingo and the Captain will receive the thanks of the company for their spirited conduct in expelling the intruder. Sir Bingo, will you allow me to apply to your flask—a little twinge of rheumatism, owing to the dampness of the grass.”

Sir Bingo, soothed by the consequence he had acquired, readily imparted to the invalid a thimbleful of his cordial, which, we believe, had been prepared by some cunning chemist in the wilds of Glenlivat. He then filled a bumper, and extended it towards the veteran, as an unequivocal symptom of reconciliation. The real turbinacious flavour soon reached the nose of the Captain, than the beverage was swallowed down his throat with symptoms of most unequivocal applause. “I shall have some hope of the young fellows of this day,” he said, “now that they begin to give up their Dutch and French distilled waters, and stick to genuine Highland ware. By Cot, it is the only liquor fit for a gentleman to drink in a morning, if he can have the good fortune to come by it, you see.”

“Or after dinner either, Captain,” said the Doctor, to whom the glass had passed in rotation; “it is worth all the wines in France for your health, and more cordial to the system besides.”

“And now,” said the Captain, “that we may not go off the ground with anything on our stomachs worse than the whisky, I can afford to say (as Captain Hector MacTurk’s character is tolerably well established) that I am sorry for the little difference that has occurred between me and my worthy friend, Sir Bingo, here.”

“And since you are so civil, Captain,” said Sir Bingo, “why, I am sorry too—only it would put the devil out of temper to lose so fine a fine day—wind south—fine air on the pool—water settled from the pond—just in trim—and I daresay three pairs of hooks have passed over my cast before this time.”

He closed this elaborate lamentation with a libation of the same cordial which he had imparted to his companions; and they returned to the body to the Hotel, where the transactions of the morning were

soon afterwards announced to the company by the following programme:—

STATEMENT.

“Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, having found himself aggrieved by the uncivil behaviour of an individual calling himself Francis Tyrrel, now or lately a resident at the Cleikum Inn, Aultoun of St Ronan, and having empowered Captain Hector MacTurk to wait upon the said Mr Tyrrel to demand an apology, under the alternative of personal satisfaction, according to the laws of honour and the practice of gentlemen, the said Tyrrel voluntarily engaged to meet the said Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, at the Buck-stane, near St Ronan's Burn, upon this present day, being Wednesday, — August. In consequence of which appointment, we, the undersigned, did attend at the place named, from one o'clock till two, without seeing or hearing anything whatever of the said Francis Tyrrel, or any one in his behalf—whereby the fact we make thus publicly known, that all men, and particularly the distinguished company assembled at the Fox Hotel, may be duly apprised of the character and behaviour of the said Francis Tyrrel in case of his again presuming to intrude himself into the society of persons of honour.

“The Fox Inn and Hotel, St Ronan's Well—August 18—.

(Signed)

“BINGO BINKS.

“HECTOR MAC'TURK.

“PHILIP WINTERBLOSSOM.”

A little lower followed this separate attestation:—

“I, Quentin Quackleben, M.D., F.R.S., D.E., B.L., XZ., &c. &c. &c. being called upon to attest what I know in the said matter, do hereby verify, that, being by accident at the Buck-stane, near St Ronan's Burn, on this present day, at the hour of one afternoon, and chancing to remain there for the space of nearly an hour, conversing with Sir Bingo Binks, Captain MacTurk, and Mr Winterblossom, we did not during that time, see or hear anything of or from the person calling himself Francis Tyrrel, whose presence at that place seemed to be unexpected by the gentlemen I have just named.” This affiche was dated like the former, and certified under the august hand of Quentin Quackleben, M.D., &c. &c. &c.

Again, and prefaced by the averment that an improper person had been lately introduced into the company of St Ronan's Well, there came forth a legislative enactment on the part of the Committee, declaring, “that no one shall in future be invited to the dinners, balls, or other entertainments of the Well, until their names shall be regularly entered in the books kept for the purpose at the rooms.” Lastly, there was a vote of thanks to Sir Bingo Binks and Captain MacTurk for their spirited conduct, and the pains which they had taken to exclude an improper person from the company at St Ronan's Well.

These annunciations speedily became the magnet of the day. All idlers crowded to peruse them; and it would be endless to notice the “God bless me's”—the “Lord have a care of us”—the “Saw ye

er the like's" of gossips, any more than the "Dear me's" and "Oh's" of the titupping misses, and the oaths of the pantalooned or ckskin'd beaux. The character of Sir Bingo rose like the stocks the news of a despatch from the Duke of Wellington, and, what is extraordinary, attained some consequence even in the estimation of his lady. All shook their heads at the recollection of the unlucky rrel, and found out much in his manner and address which convinced them that he was but an adventurer and swindler. A few, however, less partial to the Committee of Management (for whenever there is an administration, there will soon arise an opposition), dispersed among themselves, that, to give the fellow his due, the man, be he what he would, had only come among them, like the wil, when he was called for—And honest Dame Blower blessed herself when she heard of such bloodthirsty doings as had been intended, and "thanked God that honest Doctor Kickherben had come to nae harm amang a' their nonsense."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONSULTATION.

Clown. I hope here be proofs.—

Measure for Measure.

THE borough of — lies, as all the world knows, about fourteen miles distant from St Ronan's, being the county town of that shire, which, as described in the Tourist's Guide, numbers among its objects of interest that gay and popular watering-place, whose fame, doubt, will be greatly enhanced by the present annals of its earlier story. As it is at present unnecessary to be more particular concerning the scene of our story, we will fill up the blank left in the text name with the fictitious appellation of Marchthorn, having often found ourselves embarrassed in the course of a story by the occurrence of an ugly hiatus, which we cannot always at first sight fill up, with the proper reference to the rest of the narrative.

Marchthorn, then, was an old-fashioned Scottish town, the street which, on market-day, showed a reasonable number of stout great-tailed yeomen, bartering or dealing for the various commodities of their farms; and on other days of the week, only a few forlorn hoppers, crawling about like half-awakened flies, and watching the town steeple till the happy sound of twelve strokes from Time's bells should tell them it was time to take their meridian dram. The narrow windows of the shops intimated very imperfectly the miscellaneous contents of the interior, where every merchant, as the shopkeepers of Marchthorn were termed, *more Scotico*, sold everything that could be thought of. As for manufactures, there were none, except that of the careful Town-Council, who were mightily busy in preparing the warp and woof, which, at the end of every

five or six years, the town of Marchthorn contributed, for the purpose of weaving the fourth or fifth part of a member of Parliament.

In such a town it usually happens that the Sheriff-clerk, especially supposing him agent for several lairds of the higher order, is possessed of one of the best-looking houses; and such was that of Mr Bindloose. None of the smartness of the brick-built and brass-hammered mansion of a southern attorney appeared indeed in this mansion, which was a tall, thin, grim-looking building, in the centre of the town, with narrow windows and projecting gables, notched into that sort of descent, called crow-steps, and having the lower casements defended by stancheons of iron; for Mr Bindloose, as frequently happens, kept a branch of one of the two national banks which had been lately established in the town of Marchthorn.

Towards the door of this tenement there advanced slowly up the ancient but empty streets of this famous borough, a vehicle, which had it appeared in Piccadilly, would have furnished unremitted laughter for a week, and conversation for a twelvemonth. It was a two-wheeled vehicle, which claimed none of the modern appellation of tilbury, tandem, dennet, or the like; but aspired only to the humble name of that almost forgotten accommodation, a whiskey-coach, or, according to some authorities, a tim-whiskey. Green was once had been its original colour, and it was placed sturdily and safely low upon its little old-fashioned wheels, which bore much less than the usual proportion to the size of the carriage which they sustained. It had a calash head, which had been pulled up, in consideration either to the dampness of the morning air, or to the retiring delicacy of the fair form which, shrouded by leathern curtains, tenanted this venerable specimen of antediluvian coach-building.

But as this fair and modest dame noway aspired to the skill of charioteer, the management of a horse, which seemed as old as the carriage he drew, was in the exclusive charge of an old fellow in postilion's jacket, whose grey hairs escaped on each side of an old-fashioned velvet jockey-cap, and whose left shoulder was so considerably elevated above his head, that it seemed as if, with little effort, his neck might have been tucked under his arm, like that of a roast grouse-cock. This gallant equerry was mounted on a steed as old as that which toiled betwixt the shafts of the carriage, and which was guided by a leading-rein. Goading one animal with his single spur, and stimulating the other with his whip, he effected a reasonable trot upon the causeway, which only terminated when the whiskey stopped at Mr Bindloose's door—an event of importance enough to excite the curiosity of the inhabitants of that and the neighbouring houses. Wheels were laid aside, needles left sticking in the half-finished seams, and many a nose, spectacled and unspectacled, was popped out of the adjoining windows, which had the good fortune to command a view of Mr Bindloose's front door. The faces of two or three giggling clerks were visible at the barred casements of which we have spoken, much amused at the descent of an old lady from this respectable carriage, whose dress and appearance might possibly have been fashionable at the time when her equipage was new. A satin cardinal, lined with grey squirrels' skin, and a black silk bonnet

mmmed with crape, were garments which did not now excite the respect which, in their fresher days, they had doubtless commanded. It was that in the features of the wearer which would have commanded Mr Bindloose's best regard, though it had appeared in worse attire; for he beheld the face of an ancient customer who had always paid her law expenses with the ready penny, and whose account with the bank was balanced by a very respectable sum at her credit. It was, indeed, no other than our respected friend, Mrs Dods of the Cleikum Inn, St Ronan's, Aultoun.

Now her arrival intimated matter of deep import. Meg was a person of all others most averse to leave her home, where, in her opinion at least, nothing went on well without her immediate superintendence. Limited, therefore, as was her sphere, she remained fixed in the centre thereof; and few as were her satellites, they were under the necessity of performing their revolutions around her, while she herself continued stationary. Saturn, in fact, would have been scarce more surprised at a passing call from the Sun, than Mr Bindloose at this unexpected visit of his old client. In one breath he rebuked the inquisitive impertinence of his clerks, in another stimulated his housekeeper, old Hannah—for Mr Bindloose was a bluff bachelor—to get tea ready in the green parlour; and while yet talking, was at the side of the whiskey, unclasping the curtains, pulling down the apron, and assisting his old friend to dismount.

"The japanned tea-cadie, Hannah—the best bohea—bid Tib kindle a spark of fire—the morning's damp—Draw in the giggling faces of ye d—d idle scoundrels, or laugh at your ain toom pouches—it'll be lang or your weel-doing fill them." This was spoken, as the best lawyer himself might have said, *in transitu*, the rest by the aid of the carriage. "My stars, Mrs Dods, and is this really your sell, *in propria persona*?—Wha lookit for you at such a time of day?—Anthony, how's a' wi' ye, Anthony?—so ye hae taen the road again, Anthony—help us down wi' the apron, Anthony—that will do. Lean on me, Mrs Dods—help your mistress, Anthony—put the horses in my stable—the lads will give you the key.—Come away, Mrs Dods—I am blithe to see you straight your legs on the causeway of our auld borough again—come in by, and we'll see to get a some breakfast, for ye hae been asteer early this morning."

"I am a sair trouble to you, Mr Bindloose," said the old lady, accepting the offer of his arm, and accompanying him into the house; "I am e'en a sair trouble to you, but I could not rest till I had your advice on something of moment."

"Happy will I be to serve you, my gude auld acquaintance," said the Clerk; "but sit you down—sit you down—sit you down, Mrs Dods—meat and mass never hindered wark. Ye are something overcome wi' your travel—the spirit canna aye bear through the flesh, Mrs Dods; ye should remember that your life is a precious one, and ye should take care of your health, Mrs Dods."

"My life precious!" exclaimed Meg Dods; "nane o' your whully-lying, Mr Bindloose—Deil ane wad miss the auld girning alewife, Mr Bindloose, unless it were here and there a pair body, and maybe the auld house-tyke, that waldna be sae weel guided, pair fallow."

"Fie, fie! Mrs Dods," said the Clerk, in a tone of friendly rebuke, "it vexes an auld friend to hear ye speak of yourself in that restless sort of a way; and as for quitting us, I bless God I have seen you look better this half score of years. But maybe you wi' thinking of setting your house in order, which is the act of a carter and of a Christian woman—Oh! it's an awfu' thing to die intestate if we had grace to consider it."

"Aweel, I daursay I'll consider that some day soon, Mr Bindloose, but that's no my present errand."

"Be it what it like, Mrs Dods, ye are right heartily welcome here, and we have a' the day to speak of the business in hand—*fez lente*, that is the true law language—hooly and fairly, as one may say—ill treating of business with an empty stomach—and here come your tea, and I hope Hannah has made it to your taste."

Meg sipped her tea—confessed Hannah's skill in the mystery of the Chinese herb—sipped again, then tried to eat a bit of bread-and-butter, with very indifferent success; and notwithstanding the lawyer's compliments to her good looks, seemed, in reality, on the point of becoming ill.

"In the deil's name, what is the matter?" said the lawyer, too busy to read in a profession where sharp observation is peculiarly necessary to suffer these symptoms of agitation to escape him. "Ay, dame, ye are taking this business of yours deeper to heart than ever I have seen you take onything. Ony o' your banded debtors failed, or like to fail? What then, cheer ye up—you can afford a little loss, and it cannot be any great matter, or I would doubtless have heard of it."

"In troth, but it *is* a loss, Mr Bindloose; and what say ye to the loss of a friend?"

This was a possibility which had never entered the lawyer's list of calamities, and he was at some loss to conceive what the lady could possibly mean by so sentimental a proflusion. But just as he began to come out with his "Ay, ay, we are all mortal, *Vita certa, mors certissima!*" and two or three more pithy reflections which he was in the habit of uttering after funerals, when the door of the deceased was about to be opened,—just then Mrs Dods, who had been pleased to become the expounder of her own oracle.

"I see how it is, Mr Bindloose," she said; "I maun tell my ain mind, for you are no likely to guess it; and so, if ye will shut your door, and see that nane of your giggling callants are listening in the passage, I will e'en tell you how things stand with me."

Mr Bindloose hastily arose to obey her commands, gave a casual glance into the Bank-office, and saw that his idle apprentices were fast at their desks—turned the key upon them, as if it were a fit of absence, and then returned, not a little curious to know what could be the matter with his old friend; and leaving off all farther attempts to put cases, quietly drew his chair near hers, and awaited her own time to make her communication.

"Mr Bindloose," said she, "I am no sure that you may mind, at six or seven years ago, that there were twa daft English callants, lodgers of mine, that had some trouble from auld St Ronan's at shooting on the Spring-well-head muirs."

"I mind it as weel as yesterday, Mistress," said the Clerk; "by same token you gave me a note for my trouble (which wasna worth speaking about), and bade me no bring in a bill against the bairns—ye had aye a kind heart, Mrs Dods."

"Maybe, and maybe no, Mr Bindloose—that is just as I find folk. But concerning these lads, they baith left the country, and, as I ken, in some ill blude wi' ane another, and now the auldest and the best of the twa came back again about a fortnight sin' syne, and been my guest ever since."

"Aweel, and I trust he is not at his auld tricks again, goodwife?" answered the Clerk. "I havena sae muckle to say either wi' the Sheriff or the Bench of Justices as I used to hae, Mrs Dods—the Procurator-fiscal is very severe on poaching, being borne out by the new Association—few of our auld friends of the Killnakelty are able to come to the sessions now, Mrs Dods."

"The waur for the country, Mr Bindloose," replied the old lady—they were decent, considerate men, that didna plague a puir herd with muckle about a moorfowl or a mawkin, unless he turned common fowler—Sir Robert Ringhorse used to say, the herd lads shot as many gleds and pyots as they did game.—But new lords new laws—nothing but fine and imprisonment, and the game no a feather the better. If I wad hae a brace or twa of birds in the house, as every body looks for them after the twelfth—I ken what they are like to bring me—And what for no?—risk maun be paid for.—There is John Macfarlane himsell, that has keepit the muir-side thirty year, in spite of the lairds in the country, shoots, he tells me, nowadays, as if he were a rape about his neck."

"It wasna about ony game business, then, that you wanted advice?" asked Bindloose, who, though somewhat of a digresser himself, made allowance for the excursions of others from the subject in hand. "Indeed is it no, Mr Bindloose," said Meg; "but it is e'en about the unhappy callant that I spoke to you about.—Ye maun ken I have cleiket a particular fancy to this lad, Francis Tirl—a fancy that surprises my very sell, Mr Bindloose, only that there is nae sin in it."

"None—none in the world, Mrs Dods," said the lawyer, thinking of the same time within his own mind, "Oho! the mist begins to clear up—the young poacher has hit the mark, I see—winged the barren grey hen!—ay, ay,—a marriage-contract, no doubt—but I can gie her line.—Ye are a wise woman, Mrs Dods," he continued, "and can doubtless consider the chances and the changes of human affairs."

"But I could never have considered what has befallen this puir lad, Bindloose," said Mrs Dods, "through the malice of wicked men. He lived, then, at the Cleikum, as I tell you, for mair than a fortnight, as quiet as a lamb on a lea-rig—a decenter lad never came in my door—ate and drank aneugh for the gude of the house, and nae mare than was for his ain gude, whether of body or soul—red his bills ilka Saturday at e'en, as regularly as Saturday came ad."

"An admirable customer, no doubt, Mrs Dods," said the lawyer.

"Never was the like of him for that matter," answered the hordame. "But to see the malice of men!—Some of thae landlour and gill-flirts down at the filthy puddle yonder, that they ca' the W had heard of this puir lad, and the bits of pictures that he m fashion of drawing, and they maun cuitle him awa down to the ho where mony a bonny story they had clecked, Mr Bindloose, bait Mr Tirl and of mysell."

"A Commissary Court business," said the writer, going off ag upon a false scent. "I shall trim their jackets for them, Mrs D if you can but bring tight evidence of the facts—I will soon bring t to fine and palinode—I will make them repent meddling with y good name."

"My gude name! What the sorrow is the matter wi' my na Mr Bindloose?" said the irritable client. "I think ye hae been the wee cappie this morning, for as early as 't is—My gude name! onybody touched my gude name, I would neither fash council commissary—I wad be down amang them, like a jer-falcon aman when wild-geese, and the best amang them that dared to say o thing of Meg Dods but what was honest and civil, I wad sune se her cockernonnie was made of her ain hair or other folk's. *My g name, indeed!*"

"Weel, weel, Mrs Dods, I was mista'en, that's a'," said the wri "I was mista'en; and I dare to say you would haud your ain wi' y neighbours as weel as ony woman in the land—But let us hear what the grief is, in one word."

"In one word, then, Clerk Bindloose, it is little short of—murd said Meg in a low tone, as if the very utterance of the word star her.

"Murder! murder, Mrs Dods?—it cannot be—there is not a w of it in the Sheriff-office—the Procurator-fiscal kens nothing of there could not be murder in the country, and me not hear of it—God's sake, take heed what you say, woman, and dinna get your into trouble."

"Mr Bindloose, I can but speak according to my lights," said l Dods; "you are in a sense a judge in Israel, at least you are one the scribes having authority—and I tell you, with a wae and bi heart, that this puir callant of mine that was lodging in my house been murdered or kidnapped awa amang thae banditti folk down the New Waal; and I'll have the law put in force against them, i should cost me a hundred pounds."

The Clerk stood much astonished at the nature of Meg's accusat and the pertinacity with which she seemed disposed to insist upon

"I have this comfort," she continued, "that whatever has h pened, it has been by no fault of mine, Mr Bindloose; for weel I v before that bloodthirsty auld half-pay Philistine, MacTurk, got speech of him, I clawed his cantle to some purpose with my hea besom.—But the poor simple bairn himsell, that had nae mair kn ledge of the wickedness of human nature than a calf has of a flesh gulley, he threepit to see the auld hardened bloodshedder, and trys wi' him to meet wi' some of the gang at an hour certain the neist c and awa he gaed to keep tryst, but since that hour naebody ever

een on him.—And the mansworn villains now want to put a disce on him, and say that he fled the country rather than face them! likely story—fled the country for them!—and leave his bill unled—him that was sae regular—and his portmantle and his fish-rod, and the pencils and pictures he held sic a wark about!—It's faithful belief, Mr Bindloose—and ye may trust me or no as ye—that he had some foul play between the Cleikum and the Buck-ae. I have thought it, and I have dreamed it, and I will be at the com of it, or my name is not Meg Dods, and that I wad have them reckon on.—Ay, ay, that's right, Mr Bindloose, tak out your pen inkhorn, and let us set about it to purpose."

With considerable difficulty, and at the expense of much cross-mination, Mr Bindloose extracted from his client a detailed account of the proceedings of the company at the Well towards Tyrrel, far as they were known to, or suspected by Meg, making notes, the examination proceeded, of what appeared to be matter of consequence. After a moment's consideration, he asked the dame the y natural question, how she came to be acquainted with the marital fact, that a hostile appointment was made between Captain eTurk and her lodger, when, according to her own account, it made *intra parietes*, and *remotis testibus*?

Ay, but we victuallers ken weel aneugh what goes on in our ain ses," said Meg—"And what for no?—If ye *maun* ken a' about it, en listened through the keyhole of the door."

And do you say you heard them settle an appointment for a duel?" the Clerk; "and did you no take ony measures to hinder mischief, Mrs Dods, having such a respect for this lad as you say you e, Mrs Dods?—I really wadna have looked for the like o' this at r hands."

In truth, Mr Bindloose," said Meg, putting her apron to her eyes, and that's what vexes me mair than a' the rest, and ye needna say ekle to ane whose heart is e'en the sairer that she has been a ught to blame. But there has been mony a challenge, as they ca' passed in my house when thae daft lads of the Wildfire Club and Helter-Skelter were upon their rambles; and they had aye sense ough to make it up without fighting, sae that I really did not apprehend onything like mischief.—And ye maun think, moreover, Mr dloose, that it would have been an unco thing if a guest, in a decent creditable public like mine, was to have cried coward before ony hae land-louping blackguards that live down at the hottle yonder." That is to say, Mrs Dods, you were desirous your guest should at for the honour of your house," said Bindloose.

What for no, Mr Bindloose?—Isna that kind of fray aye about our? and what for should the honour of a substantial, four-nooked, sted house of three stories, no be foughten for, as weel as the credit ony of these feckless callants that make such a fray about their reation?—I promise you my house, the Cleikum, stood in the Auld wn of St Ronan's before they were born, and it will stand there er they are hanged, as I trust some of them are like to be."

Well, but perhaps your lodger had less zeal for the honour of the use, and has quietly taken himself out of harm's way," said Mr

Bindloose; "for if I understand your story, this meeting never took place."

"Have less zeal!" said Meg, determined to be pleased with no supposition of her lawyer, "Mr Bindloose, ye little ken him—I wish I had seen him when he was angry!—I dared hardly face him mysel and there are no mony folk that I am feared for—meeting! there was nae meeting, I trow—they never dared to meet him fairly—I am sure waur came of it than ever would have come of a meeting for Anthony heard twa shots gang off as he was watering the aunaig down at the burn, and that is not far frae the footpath that leads to the Buck-stane. I was angry at him for no making on to see what the matter was, but he thought it was auld Pirner out wi' the double barrel, and he wasna keen of making himself a witness, in case he suld have been caa'd on in the Poaching Court."

"Well," said the Sheriff-clerk, "and I daresay he did hear a poacher fire a couple of shots—nothing more likely. Believe me, Mrs Dods, your guest had no fancy for the party Captain MacTurk invited him to—and being a quiet sort of man, he has just walked away to his own home, if he has one—I am really sorry you have given yourself the trouble of this long journey about so simple a matter."

Mrs Dods remained with her eyes fixed on the ground in a very sullen and discontented posture, and when she spoke, it was in a tone of corresponding displeasure.

"Aweel—aweel—live and learn, they say—I thought I had a friend in you, Mr Bindloose—I am sure I aye took your part when folks miscaa'd ye, and said ye were this, that, and the other thing, and little better than an auld sneck-drawing loon, Mr Bindloose.—And ye have aye keepit my penny of money, though, nae doubt, Tam Turnpenny lives nearer me, and they say he allows half a per cent mair than ye do if the siller lies, and mine is but seldom steered."

"But ye have not the Bank's security, madam," said Mr Bindloose reddening. "I say harm of nae man's credit—ill would it besee me—but there is a difference between Tam Turnpenny and the Bank I trow."

"Weel, weel, Bank here Bank there, I thought I had a friend in you Mr Bindloose; and here am I, come from my ain house all the way to yours for sma' comfort, I think."

"My stars, madam," said the perplexed scribe, "what would you have me to do in such a blind story as yours, Mrs Dods?—Be a though reasonable—consider that there is no *Corpus delicti*."

"*Corpus delicti*? and what's that?" said Meg; "something to be paid for, nae doubt, for your hard words a' end in that—And what for suld I no have a *Corpus delicti*, or a Habeas Corpus, or any other Corpus that I like, sae lang as I am willing to lick and lay down the ready siller?"

"Lord help and pardon us, Mrs Dods," said the distressed agent "ye mistake the matter a' thegeather! When I say there is no *Corpus delicti*, I mean to say there is no proof that a crime has been committed." ¹

¹ For example, a man cannot be tried for murder merely in the case of the non-appearance of an individual; there must be proof that the party has been murdered.

"And does the man say that murder is not a crime, then?" answered Meg, who had taken her own view of the subject far too strongly to be converted to any other—"Weel I wot it's a crime, both by the law of God and man, and mony a pretty man has been hanged for it."

"I ken all that very weel," answered the writer; "but, my stars, as Dods, there is nae evidence of murder in this case—nae proof that a man has been slain—nae production of his dead body—and that is what we call the *Corpus delicti*."

"Weel, than, the deil lick it out of ye," said Meg, rising in wrath, "or I will awa hame again; and as for the puir lad's body, I'll hae it buried, if it cost me turning the earth for three miles round wi' pick and shool—if it were but to give the puir bairn Christian burial, and bring punishment on MacTurk and the murdering crew at the same time, and to shame an auld doited fule like yourself, John Bindloose." She rose in wrath to call her vehicle; but it was neither the interest nor the intention of the writer that his customer and he should part on such indifferent terms. He implored her patience, and reminded her that the horses, poor things, had just come off their stage after an argument which sounded irresistible in the ears of the old shepherd, in whose early education due care of the post-cattle mingled with the most sacred duties. She therefore resumed her seat again in a sullen mood, and Mr Bindloose was cudgelling his brains for the argument which might bring the old lady to reason, when his attention was drawn by a noise in the passage.

CHAPTER XV.

A PRAISER OF PAST TIMES.

——— Now your traveller,
He and his toothpick at my worship's mess.

King John.

THE noise stated at the conclusion of last chapter to have disturbed Mr Bindloose, was the rapping of one, as in haste and impatience, at the Bank-office door, which office was an apartment of the Banker's house, on the left hand of his passage, as the parlour in which he had received Mrs Dods was upon the right.

In general this office was patent to all having business there; but at present, whatever might be the hurry of the party who knocked, the clerks within the office could not admit him, being themselves made prisoners by the prudent jealousy of Mr Bindloose, to prevent him from listening to his consultation with Mrs Dods. They therefore answered the angry and impatient knocking of the stranger only with stifled giggling from within, finding it no doubt an excellent joke, that their master's precaution was thus interfering with his own discharge of duty.

With one or two hearty curses upon them as the regular plague of his life, Mr Bindloose darted into the passage, and admitted the stranger into his official apartment. The doors, both of the parlour and office remaining open, the ears of Luckie Dods (experienced, the reader knows, in collecting intelligence) could partly overhear what passed. The conversation seemed to regard a cash transaction of some importance, as Meg became aware when the stranger raised a voice which was naturally sharp and high, as he did when uttering the following words, towards the close of a conversation which had lasted about five minutes—"Premium?—Not a pice, sir—not a cour—not a farthing—premium for a Bank of England bill? d'ye take me for a fool, sir?—do not I know that you call forty days par when you give remittances to London?"

Mr Bindloose was here heard to mutter something indistinct about the custom of the trade.

"Custom!" retorted the stranger, "no such thing—damn'd be the custom if it is one—don't tell me of customs—'Sbodikins, man, I know the rate of exchange all over the world, and have drawn bills from Timbuctoo—My friends in the Strand filed it along with Bruce's from Gondar—talk to me of premium on a Bank of England post-bill!—What d'ye look at the bill for?—D'ye think it doubtful?—I will change it."

"By no means necessary," answered Bindloose, "the bill is quite right; but it is usual to indorse, sir."

"Certainly—reach me a pen—d'ye think I can write with my rattan?—What sort of ink is this?—yellow as curry sauce—never in my mind—there is my name—Peregrine Touchwood—I got it from the Willoughbys, my Christian name—Have I my full change here?"

"Your full change, sir," answered Bindloose.

"Why, you should give *me* a premium, friend, instead of me giving you one."

"It is out of our way, I assure you, sir," said the banker, "quite out of our way—but if you would step into the parlour and take a cup of tea——"

"Why, ay," said the stranger, his voice sounding more distinctly as (talking all the while, and ushered along by Mr Bindloose) he left the office, and moved towards the parlour, "a cup of tea were no such bad thing, if one could come by it genuine—but as for your premium——" So saying, he entered the parlour and made his bow to Mrs Dods, who, seeing what she called a decent, purpose-like body, and aware that his pocket was replenished with English and Scottish paper currency, returned the compliment with her best curtsy.

Mr Touchwood, when surveyed more at leisure, was a short, stout, active man, who, though sixty years of age and upwards, retained in his sinews and frame the elasticity of an earlier period. His countenance expressed self-confidence, and something like a contempt for those who had neither seen nor endured so much as he had himself. His short black hair was mingled with grey, but not entirely whitened by it. His eyes were jet-black, deep-set, small, and sparkling, and contributed, with a short turned-up nose, to express an irritable and

clerical habit. His complexion was burnt to a brick-colour by the vicissitudes of climate to which it had been subjected; and his face, which, at the distance of a yard or two, seemed hale and smooth, appeared, when closely examined, to be seamed with a million of wrinkles, crossing each other in every direction possible, but as fine as if drawn by the point of a very small needle.¹ His dress was a blue coat and buff waistcoat, half-boots remarkably well blacked, and a white handkerchief tied with military precision. The only antiquated part of his dress was a cocked hat of equilateral dimensions, in the button-hole of which he wore a very small cockade. Mrs Dods, accustomed to judge of persons by their first appearance, said that, in the three steps which he made from the door to the tea-table, she recognised, without the possibility of mistake, the gait of a person who was well to pass in the world; "and that," she added with a laugh, "is what we victuallers are seldom deceived in. If a gold-laced waistcoat has an empty pouch, the plain swan's-down will be the bawler of the twa."

"A drizzling morning, good madam," said Mr Touchwood, as with a view of sounding what sort of company he had got into.

"A fine saft morning for the crap, sir," answered Mrs Dods, with a solemnity.

"Right, my good madam; *soft* is the very word, though it has not been in some time since I heard it. I have cast a double hank about the round world since I last heard of a soft² morning."

"You will be from these parts, then?" said the writer, ingeniously putting a case, which, he hoped, would induce the stranger to explain himself. "And yet, sir, he added," after a pause, "I was thinking that Touchwood is not a Scottish name, at least that I was not."

"Scottish name?—no," replied the traveller; "but a man may have been in these parts before without being a native—or, being a foreigner, he may have had some reason to change his name—there are many reasons why men change their names."

"Certainly, and some of them very good ones," said the lawyer; "in the common case of an heir of entail, where deed of provision and tailzie is maist ordinarily implemented by taking up name and arms."

"Ay, or in the case of a man having made the country too hot for him under his own proper appellative," said Mr Touchwood.

"That is a supposition, sir," replied the lawyer, "which it would become me to put.—But at any rate, if you knew this country intimately, ye cannot but be marvellously pleased with the change we have been making since the American war,—hill-sides bearing clover instead of heather,—rents doubled, trebled, quadrupled—the auld kirks pulled down, and gentlemen living in as good houses as you will see anywhere in England."

"Much good may it do them for a pack of fools!" replied Mr Touchwood, hastily.

"You do not seem much delighted with our improvements, sir,"

This was a peculiarity in the countenance of the celebrated Cossack leader Platoff. An epithet which expresses, in Scotland, what the barometer calls rainy.

said the banker, astonished to hear a dissentient voice where he conceived all men unanimous.

"Pleased!" answered the stranger—"Yes, as much pleased as I am with the devil, who, I believe, set many of them agoing. You have got an idea that everything must be changed—Unstable as water, ye shall not excel—I tell ye, there have been more changes in this poor nook of yours within the last forty years, than in the great empires of the East for the space of four thousand, for what I know."

"And why not," replied Bindloose, "if they be changes for the better?"

"But they are *not* for the better," replied Mr Touchwood, eagerly. "I left your peasantry as poor as rats indeed, but honest and industrious, enduring their lot in this world with firmness, and looking forward to the next with hope—Now they are mere eye-servants—looking at their watches, forsooth, every ten minutes, lest they should work for their master half an instant after loosing-time—And then instead of studying the Bible on the work days, to kittle the clergyman with doubtful points of controversy on the Sabbath, they glean all their theology from Tom Paine and Voltaire."

"Weel I wot the gentleman speaks truth," said Mrs Dods. "I fand a bundle of their bawbee blasphemies in my ain kitchen—But I trow I made a clean house of the packman loon that brought them—No content wi' turning the tawpies' heads wi' ballants, and driving them daft wi' ribands, to cheat them out of their precious souls, and give them the deevil's ware, that I suld say sae, in exchange for the siller that suld support their puir father that's aff wark and bedridden!"

"Father! madam," said the stranger; "they think no more of their father than Regan or Goneril."

"In gude troth, ye have skeel of our sect, sir," replied the dame. "they are gomerils, every one of them—I tell them sae every hour of the day, but catch them profiting by the doctrine."

"And then the brutes are turned mercenary, madam," said Mr Touchwood. "I remember when a Scottishman would have scorned to touch a shilling that he had not earned, and yet was as ready to help a stranger as an Arab of the desert. And now I did but drop my cane the other day as I was riding—a fellow who was working at the hedge made three steps to lift it—I thanked him, and my friend threw his hat on his head, and 'damned my thanks, if that were all—Saint Giles could not have excelled him."

"Weel, weel," said the banker, "that may be a' as you say, sir, and nae doubt wealth makes wit waver, but the country's wealthy that cannot be denied, and wealth, sir, ye ken——"

"I know wealth makes itself wings," answered the cynical stranger. "but I am not quite sure we have it even now. You make a great show, indeed, with building and cultivation; but stock is not capital any more than the fat of a corpulent man is health or strength."

"Surely, Mr Touchwood," said Bindloose, "who felt his own account in the modern improvements, "a set of landlords, living like lairds in good earnest, and tenants with better housekeeping than the lairds used to have, and facing Whitsunday and Martinmas as I

ould face my breakfast—if these are not signs of wealth, I do not
ow where to seek for them.”

They are signs of folly, sir,” replied Touchwood; “folly that is
r, and renders itself poorer by desiring to be thought rich; and
v they come by the means they are so ostentatious of, you, who
a banker, perhaps can tell me better than I can guess.”

There is maybe an accommodation bill discounted now and then,
Touchwood; but men must have accommodation, or the world
ld stand still—accommodation is the grease that makes the wheels

Ay, makes them go down hill to the devil,” answered Touchwood.
left you bothered about one Air bank, but the whole country is an
bank now, I think—And who is to pay the piper?—But it is all
—I will see little more of it—it is a perfect Babel, and would turn
head of a man who has spent his life with people who love sit-
g better than running, silence better than speaking, who never eat
when they are hungry, never drink but when thirsty, never laugh
hout a jest, and never speak but when they have something to say.
t here, it is all run, ride, and drive—froth, foam, and flippancy—
steadiness—no character.”

I’ll lay the burden of my life,” said Dame Dods, looking towards
friend Bindloose, “that the gentleman has been at the new Spaw-
al yonder.”

Spaw do you call it, madam?—if you mean the new establish-
nt that has been spawned down yonder at St Ronan’s, it is the
y fountain-head of folly and coxcombry—a Babel for noise, and a
nity-fair for nonsense—no well in your swamps tenanted by such
onceited colony of clamorous frogs.”

Sir, sir!” exclaimed Dame Dods, delighted with the unqualified
tence passed upon her fashionable rivals, and eager to testify her
pect for the judicious stranger who had pronounced it,—“will you
me have the pleasure of pouring you out a dish of tea?” And so
ing, she took bustling possession of the administration which had
erto remained in the hands of Mr Bindloose himself. “I hope it
o your taste, sir,” she continued, when the traveller had accepted
courtesy, with the grateful acknowledgment, which men addicted
speak a great deal usually show to a willing auditor.

It is as good as we have any right to expect, ma’am,” answered
Touchwood; “not quite like what I have drunk at Canton with
Fong Qua; but the Celestial Empire does not send its best tea
Leadenhall Street, nor does Leadenhall Street send its best to
rchthorn.”

That may be very true, sir,” replied the dame; “but I will ven-
e to say that Mr Bindloose’s tea is muckle better than you had at
Spaw-Waal yonder.”

Tea, madam!—I saw none—Ash leaves and black-thorn leaves
e brought in in painted canisters, and handed about by powder-
keys in livery, and consumed by those who liked it, amidst the
ttering of parrots and the squalling of kittens. I longed for the
s of the Spectator, when I might have laid my penny on the bar,
retired without ceremony—But no—this blessed decoction was

circulated under the auspices of some half-crazed blue-stocking or other, and we were saddled with all the formality of an entertainment for this miserable allowance of a cockle-shell full of cat-lap per head.

"Weel, sir," answered Dame Dods, "all I can say is, that if it has been my luck to have served you at the Cleikum Inn, which our folk have kept for these twa generations, I canna pretend to say ye should have had such tea as ye have been used to in foreign parts where grows, but the best I had I wad have gi'en it to a gentleman of your appearance, and I never charged mair than a sixpence in all my time and my father's before me."

"I wish I had known the old Inn was still standing, madam," said the traveller; "I should certainly have been your guest, and sent down for the water every morning—the doctors insist I must use Cheltenham, or some substitute, for the bile—though, d—n them, I believe it's only to hide their own ignorance. And I thought this Spaw would have been the least evil of the two; but I have been fairly overreached—one might as well live in the inside of a bell. I think young St Ronan's must be mad, to have established such a Vanity fair upon his father's old property."

"Do you ken this St Ronan's that now is?" inquired the dame.

"By report only," said Mr Touchwood; "but I have heard of the family, and I think I have read of them too in Scottish history. I am sorry to understand they are lower in the world than they have been. This young man does not seem to take the best way to mend matters, spending his time among gamblers and black-legs."

"I should be sorry if it were so," said honest Meg Dods, whose hereditary respect for the family always kept her from joining in any scandal affecting the character of the young laird—"My forbears, sir, have had kindness frae his; and although maybe he may have forgotten all about it, it wad ill become me to say onything of him that should not be said of his father's son."

Mr Bindloose had not the same motive for forbearance; he declared against Mowbray as a thoughtless dissipater of his own fortune and that of others. "I have some reason to speak," he said, "have two of his notes for £100 each, which I discounted out of mere kindness and respect for his ancient family, and which he thinks nae mair of retiring than he does of paying the national debt—And here has he been raking every shop in Marchthorn to fit out an entertainment for all the fine folk at the Well yonder; and tradesfolks are obliged to take his acceptances for their furnishings. But they may cash his bills that will; I ken ane that will never advance a bawbee on any paper that has John Mowbray either on the back or front of it. He had mair need to be paying the debts which he has made already, than making new anes, that he may feed fules and flatterers."

"I believe he is likely to lose his preparations, too," said Mr Touchwood, "for the entertainment has been put off, as I heard, in consequence of Miss Mowbray's illness."

"Ay, ay, puir thing!" said Dame Margaret Dods; "her health has been unsettled for this mony a day."

"Something wrong here, they tell me," said the traveller, pointing to his own forehead significantly.

"God only kens," replied Mrs Dods; "but I rather suspect the art than the head—the puir thing is hurried here and there, and wn to the Waal, and up again, and nae society or quiet at hame; and a' thing ganging this unthrifty gate—nae wonder she is no that well settled."

"Well," replied Touchwood, "she is worse they say than she has been, and that has occasioned the party at Shaws-Castle having been let off. Besides, now this fine young lord has come down to the well, undoubtedly they will wait her recovery."

"A lord!" ejaculated the astonished Mrs Dods; "a lord come wn to the Waal—they will be neither to haud nor to bind now—ce wud and ay waur—a lord!—set them up and shute them forward—a lord!—the Lord have a care o' us!—a lord at the hottle—Maister Touchwood, it's my mind he will only prove to be a Lord o' session."

"Nay, not so, my good lady," replied the traveller, "he is an English lord, and, as they say, a Lord of Parliament—but some folk pretend to say there is a flaw in the title."

"I'll warrant is there—a dozen of them!" said Meg, with alacrity for she could by no means endure to think on the accumulation of ignity likely to accrue to the rival establishment, from its becoming the residence of an actual nobleman. "I'll warrant he'll prove a ndlouping lord on their hand, and they will be e'en cheap o' the ss—And he has come down out of order it's like, and nae doubt he'll no be lang there before he will recover his health, for the credit the Spaw."

"Faith, madam, his present disorder is one which the Spaw will hardly cure—he is shot in the shoulder with a pistol-bullet—a robbery attempted, it seems—that is one of your new accomplishments—no such thing happened in Scotland in my time—men would have sooner expected to meet with the phoenix than with a highwayman."

"And where did this happen, if you please, sir?" asked the man of bills.

"Somewhere near the old village," replied the stranger; "and, if I am rightly informed, on Wednesday last."

"This explains your twa shots, I am thinking, Mrs Dods," said Mr Bindloose; "your groom heard them on the Wednesday—it must have been this attack on the stranger nobleman."

"Maybe it was, and maybe it was not," said Mrs Dods; "but I'll be gude reason before I give up my ain judgment in that case. I had like to ken if this gentleman," she added, returning to the subject from which Mr Touchwood's interesting conversation had for a w minutes diverted her thoughts, "has heard aught of Mr Tirl?"

"If you mean the person to whom this paper relates," said the stranger, taking a printed handbill from his pocket, "I heard of little else—the whole place rang of him, till I was almost as sick of yrrel as William Rufus was. Some idiotical quarrel which he had engaged in, and which he had not fought out, as their wisdom thought he should have done, was the principal cause of censure. That is another folly now, which has gained ground among you. Formerly, two old proud lairds, or cadets of good family, perhaps

quarrelled, and had a rencontre, or fought a duel after the fashion of their old Gothic ancestors; but men who had no grandfathers never dreamt of such folly—And here the folk denounce a trumpery dauber of canvass, for such I understand to be this hero's occupation, as if he were a field-officer, who made valour his profession and who, if you deprived him of his honour, was like to be deprived of his bread at the same time.—Ha, ha, ha! it reminds one of Don Quixote, who took his neighbour, Samson Carrasco, for a knight errant.”

The perusal of this paper, which contained the notes formerly laid before the reader, containing the statement of Sir Bingo, and the censure which the company at the Well had thought fit to pass upon his affair with Mr Tyrrel, induced Mr Bindloose to say to Mrs Dods with as little exultation on the superiority of his own judgment as human nature would permit,—

“Ye see now that I was right, Mrs Dods, and that there was nae earthly use in your fashing yoursell wi' this lang journey—The laird has just ta'en the bent, rather than face Sir Bingo; and troth, I think him the wiser of the twa for sae doing—There ye hae printed for it.”

Meg answered somewhat sullenly, “Ye may be mista'en, for a that, your ainsell, for as wise as ye are, Mr Bindloose; I shall hae that matter mair strictly inquired into.”

This led to a renewal of the altercation concerning the probable fate of Tyrrel, in the course of which the stranger was induced to take some interest in the subject.

At length Mrs Dods, receiving no countenance from the experienced lawyer, for the hypothesis she had formed, rose, in something like displeasure, to order her whiskey to be prepared. But hostess as she was herself, when in her own dominions, she reckoned without her host in the present instance; for the hump-backed postilion, as absolute in his department as Mrs Dods herself, declared that the cattle would not be fit for the road these two hours yet. The good lady was therefore obliged to await his pleasure, bitterly lamenting all the while the loss which a house of public entertainment was sure to sustain by the absence of the landlord or landlady, and anticipating a long list of broken dishes, miscalculated reckonings, unarranged chambers, and other disasters, which she was to expect at her return. Mr Bindloose, zealous to recover the regard of his good friend and client, which he had in some degree forfeited by contradicting her on a favourite subject, did not choose to offer the unpleasing, though obvious topic of consolation, that an unfrequented inn is little exposed to the accidents she apprehended. On the contrary, he condoled with her very cordially, and went so far as to hint, that if Mr Touchwood had come to Marchthorn with post-horses, as he supposed from his dress, she could have the advantage of them to return with more despatch to St Ronan's.

I am not sure,” said Mr Touchwood, suddenly, “but I may return there myself. In that case I will be glad to set this good lady down, and to stay a few days at her house, if she will receive me.—I respect a woman like you, ma'am, who pursues the occupation of your

her—I have been in countries, ma'am, where people have followed the same trade, from father to son, for thousands of years—And I like the fashion—it shows a steadiness and sobriety of character.”

Mrs Dods put on a joyous countenance at this proposal, protesting that all should be done in her power to make things agreeable; and while her good friend, Mr Bindloose, expatiated upon the comfort her new guest would experience at the Cleikum, she silently contemplated with delight the prospect of a speedy and dazzling triumph, by carrying off a creditable customer from her showy and successful rival at the Well.

“I shall be easily accommodated, ma'am,” said the stranger; “I have travelled too much and too far to be troublesome. A Spanish gipsy, a Persian khan, or a Turkish caravanserail, is all the same to me—only, as I have no servant—indeed, never can be plagued with one of these idle loiterers,—I must beg you will send to the Well for a pottle of the water on such mornings as I cannot walk there myself—I find it is really of some service to me.”

Mrs Dods readily promised compliance with this reasonable request; graciously conceding, that there “could be nae ill in the matter itself, but maybe some gude—it was only the New Inn, and the daft havrels that they caa'd the Company, that she misliked. Ilk had a jest that St Ronan dookit the Deevil in the Waal, which mair'd it taste aye since of brimstone—but she dared to say that was papist nonsense, for she was tell't by him that kend weel, and that was the minister himsell, that St Ronan was nane of your idolatrous man saunts, but a Chaldee” (meaning probably a Culdee), “whilk is doubtless a very different story.”

Matters being thus arranged to the satisfaction of both parties the post-chaise was ordered, and speedily appeared at the door of Mr Bindloose's mansion. It was not without a private feeling of reluctance that honest Meg mounted the step of a vehicle, on the side of which was painted, “FOX INN AND HOTEL, ST RONAN'S WELL;” but it was too late to start such scruples.

“I never thought to have entered ane o' their hurley-hackets,” she said, as she seated herself; “and sic a like thing as it is—scarce room for twa folk!—Weel I wot, Mr Touchwood, when I was in the ring line, our twa chaises wad hae carried, ilk ane o' them, four oon folk and as mony bairns. I trust that doited creature Anthony will come awa back wi' my whiskey and the cattle as soon as they have had their feed.—Are ye sure ye hae room aneugh, sir? I wad fain hotch mysell farther yont.”

“Oh, ma'am,” answered the Oriental, “I am accustomed to all sorts of conveyances—a dooly, a litter, a cart, a palanquin, or a post-chaise, are all alike to me—I think I could be an inside with Queen Elizabeth in a nut-shell, rather than not get forward.—Begging your pardons, if you have no particular objections, I will light my root,” &c. &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CLERGYMAN.

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year.

GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*

MRS DODS's conviction, that her friend Tyrrel had been murdered by the sanguinary Captain MacTurk, remained firm and unshaken; but some researches for the supposed body having been found fruitless, as well as expensive, she began to give up the matter in despair. "She had done her duty"—"she left the matter to them that had charge anent such things"—and "Providence would bring the mystery to light in his own fitting time"—such were the moralities with which the good dame consoled herself; and, with less obstinacy than Mr Bindloose had expected, she retained her opinion without changing her banker and man of business.

Perhaps Meg's acquiescent inactivity in a matter which she had threatened to probe so deeply, was partly owing to the place of power Tyrrel being supplied in her blue chamber, and in her daily thoughts and cares, by her new guest, Mr Touchwood; in possessing whom a deserter as he was from the Well, she obtained, according to her view of the matter, a decided triumph over her rivals. It sometimes required, however, the full force of this reflection, to induce Meg, old and crabbed as she was, to submit to the various caprices and exactions of attention which were displayed by her new lodger. Never any man talked so much as Touchwood, of his habitual indifference to food, and accommodation in travelling; and probably there never was any traveller who gave more trouble in a house to its entertainment. He had his own whims about cookery; and when these were contradicted, especially if he felt at the same time a twinge of incipient gout, one would have thought he had taken a lesson in the pastry-shop of Bedreddin Hassan, and was ready to renew the scene of the unhappy cream-tart, which was compounded without pepper. Every now and then he started some new doctrine in culinary matters, which Mrs Dods deemed a heresy; and then the very house rang with their disputes. Again, his bed must necessarily be made at a certain angle from the pillow to the foot-posts, and the slightest deviation from this disturbed, he said, his nocturnal rest, and did certainly ruffle his temper. He was equally whimsical about the brushing of his clothes, the arrangement of the furniture in his apartment, and a thousand minutiae, which in conversation he seemed totally to contemn.

It may seem singular, but such is the inconsistency of human nature, that a guest of this fanciful and capricious disposition gave much more satisfaction to Mrs Dods, than her quiet and indifferent friend, Mr Tyrrel. If her present lodger could blame, he could also applaud; and no artist, conscious of such skill as Mrs Dods

essed, is indifferent to the praises of such a connoisseur as Mr Touchwood. The pride of art comforted her for the additional pour; nor was it a matter unworthy of this most honest publican's consideration, that the guests who give most trouble are usually those to incur the largest bills, and pay them with the best grace. On this point Touchwood was a jewel of a customer. He never denied himself the gratification of the slightest whim, whatever expense he might himself incur, or whatever trouble he might give to those about him; and all was done under protestation that the matter in question was the most indifferent thing to him in the world. "What devil did he care for Burgess's sauces, he that had eat his kous-sou, spiced with nothing but the sand of the desert? only it was a name for Mrs Dods to be without what every decent house above the rank of an alehouse ought to be largely provided with."

In short, he fussed, fretted, commanded, and was obeyed; kept the house in hot water, and yet was so truly good-natured when essential matters were in discussion, that it was impossible to bear him the least ill-will; so that Mrs Dods, though in a moment of spleen she sometimes wished him at the top of Tintock, always ended by singling forth his praises. She could not, indeed, help suspecting that he was a Nabob, as well from his conversation about foreign parts, as from his freaks of indulgence to himself, and generosity to others,—tributes which she understood to be proper to most "Men of Ind." But although the reader has heard her testify a general dislike to the species of Fortune's favourites, Mrs Dods had sense enough to know that a Nabob living in the neighbourhood, who raises the price of eggs and poultry upon the good housewives around, was very different from a Nabob residing within her own gates, drawing all his supplies from her own larder, and paying, without hesitation or question, whatever bills her conscience permitted her to send in. In short, we come back to the point at which we perhaps might have stopped some time since, landlady and guest were very much pleased with each other.

But Ennui finds entrance into every scene, when the gloss of novelty is over; and the fiend began to seize upon Mr Touchwood when he had got all matters to his mind in the Cleikum Inn—he instructed Dame Dods in the mysteries of curry and mullegany—drilled the chambermaid into the habit of making his bed at the angle recommended by Sir John Sinclair—and made some progress in instructing the hump-backed postilion in the Arabian mode of grooming. Pamphlets and newspapers, sent from London and Edinburgh by loads, proved inadequate to route this invader of Mr Touchwood's comforts; and, at last, he bethought himself of company. The natural resource would have been the Well—but the traveller had a holy shivering of awe, which crossed him at the very recollection of Lady Penelope, who had worked him rather hard during his former brief residence; and although Lady Binks's beauty might have charmed an Asiatic, by the plump graces of its contour, the senior was past the thoughts of a Sultana and a harem. At length a bright idea crossed his mind, and he suddenly demanded of Mrs Dods, who was pouring out his tea for breakfast, into a large

cup of a very particular species of china, of which he had presented her with a service on condition of her rendering him this personal good office,—

“Pray, Mrs Dods, what sort of a man is your minister?”

“He’s just a man like other men, Mr Touchwood,” replied Meg Dods; “what sort of a man should he be?”

“A man like other men?—ay—that is to say, he has the usual complement of legs and arms, eyes and ears—But is he a sensible man?”

“No muckle o’ that, sir,” answered Dame Dods; “for if he was drinking this very tea that ye gat down from London wi’ the mail, he wad mistake it for common bohea.”

“Then he has not all his organs—wants a nose, or the use of one at least,” said Mr Touchwood; “the tea is right gunpowder—a perfect nosegay.”

“Aweel, that may be,” said the landlady; “but I have gi’en the minister a dram frae my ain best bottle of real Coniac brandy, and ma I never stir frae the bit, if he didna commend my whisky when he set down the glass! There is no ane o’ them in the Presbytery but himsell—ay, or in the Synod either—but wad hae kend whisky frae brandy.”

“But what *sort* of man is he?—Has he learning?” demanded Touchwood.

“Learning?—aneugh o’ that,” answered Meg; “just dung down naught wi’ learning—lets a’ things about the Manse gang whilk gae them they will, sae they dinna plague him upon the score. An awfu’ thing it is to see sic an ill-red-up house! If I had the twa tawpies that sor upon the honest man ae week under my drilling, I think I wad show them how to sort a lodging!”

“Does he preach well?” asked the guest.

“Oh, weel aneugh, weel aneugh—sometimes he will fling in a lang word or a bit of learning that our farmers and bannet lairds cannae sae weel follow—But what of that, as I am aye telling them?—that they pay stipend get aye the mair for their siller?”

“Does he attend to his parish?—Is he kind to the poor?”

“Ower muckle o’ that, Maister Touchwood—I am sure he makes the Word gude, and turns not away from those that ask o’ him—his very pocket is picked by a wheen ne’er-do-weel blackguards that gae sorning through the country.”

“Sorning through the country, Mrs Dods?—what would you think if you had seen the Fakirs, the Dervises, the Bonzes, the Imaums, the monks, and the mendicants, that I have seen?—But go on, never mind—Does this minister of yours come much into company?”

“Company?—gae wa’,” replied Meg, “he keeps nae company a’ a’, neither in his ain house or ony gate else. He comes down in the morning in a lang ragged night-gown, like a potato bogie, and down he sits amang his books; and if they dinna bring him something to eat, the puir demented body has never the heart to cry for aught, and he has been kend to sit for ten hours thegither, black fasting, while he is a’ mere papistrie, though he does it just out o’ forget.”

“Why, landlady, in that case your parson is anything but the ordin-

kind of man you described him—Forget his dinner!—the man t be mad—he shall dine with me to-day—he shall have such a er as I'll be bound he won't forget in a hurry."

Ye'll maybe find that easier said than dune," said Mrs Dods; e honest man hasna, in a sense, the taste of his mouth—forby, he er dines out of his ain house—that is, when he dines at a—A k of milk and a bit of bread serves his turn, or maybe a cauld to. It's a heathenish fashion of him, for as good a man as he is; surely there is nae Christian man but loves his own bowels."

Why, that may be," answered Touchwood; "but I have known y who took so much care of their own bowels, my good dame, as ave none for any one else. But come—bustle to the work—get as good a dinner for two as you can set out—have it ready at e to an instant—get the old hock I had sent me from Cockburn bottle of the particular Indian sherry—and another of your own claret—fourth binn, you know, Meg. And stay, he is a priest, must have port—have all ready, but don't bring the wine into sun, as that silly fool Beck did the other day.—I can't go down he larder myself, but let us have no blunders."

Nae fear, nae fear," said Meg, with a toss of the head, "I need body to look into my larder but mysell, I trow—but it's an unco er of wine for twa folk, and ane o' them a minister."

Why, you foolish person, is there not the woman up the village has just brought another fool into the world, and will she not d sack and caudle if we leave some of our wine?"

A gude ale-posset wad set her better," said Meg; "however, if your will, it shall be my pleasure. But the like of sic a gentle- as yoursell never entered my doors!"

he traveller was gone before she had completed the sentence; , leaving Meg to bustle and maunder at her leisure, away he ched, with the haste that characterised all his motions when he any new project in his head, to form an acquaintance with the ister of St Ronan's, whom, while he walks down the street to the use, we will endeavour to introduce to the reader.

he Rev. Josiah Cargill was the son of a small farmer in the south Scotland; and a weak constitution, joined to the disposition for y which frequently accompanies infirm health, induced his par-, though at the expense of some sacrifices, to educate him for the istry. They were the rather led to submit to the privations ch were necessary to support this expense, because they con- ed from their family traditions that he had in his veins some por- of the blood of that celebrated Boanerges of the Covenant, ald Cargill, who was slain by the persecutors at the town of ensferry, in the melancholy days of Charles II., merely because, he plenitude of his sacerdotal power, he had cast out of the ch, and delivered over to Satan by a formal excommunication, King and Royal family, with all the ministers and courtiers unto belonging. But if Josiah was really derived from this mpromising champion, the heat of the family spirit which he at have inherited was qualified by the sweetness of his own dis- ion, and the quiet temper of the times in which he had the good

fortune to live. He was characterised by all who knew him as mild, gentle, and studious lover of learning, who in the quiet prosecution of his own sole object, the acquisition of knowledge, and especially of that connected with his profession, had the utmost industry for all whose pursuits were different from his own. His relaxations were those of a gentle, mild, and pensive temper, and were limited to a ramble, almost always solitary, among the woods and hills, in praise of which he was sometimes guilty of a sonnet, but rather because he could not help the attempt, than as proposing himself the fame or the rewards which attend the successful poet. Indeed, far from seeking to insinuate his fugitive pieces into magazines or newspapers, he blushed at his poetical attempts even when alone, and, in fact, was rarely so indulgent to his vein as to commit them to paper.

From the same maid-like modesty of disposition our student suppressed a strong natural turn towards drawing, although he was repeatedly complimented upon the few sketches which he made, by some whose judgment was generally admitted. It was, however, this neglected talent, which, like the swift feet of the stag in the fable, was fated to render him a service which he might in vain have expected from his worth and learning.

My Lord Bidmore, a distinguished connoisseur, chanced to be in search of a private tutor for his son and heir, the Honourable Augustus Bidmore, and for this purpose had consulted the Professor of Theology, who passed before him in review several favourite students, any of whom he conceived well suited for the situation; but still his answer to the important and unlooked-for question, "Does the candidate understand drawing?" was in the negative. The Professor, indeed, added his opinion, that such an accomplishment was neither to be desired nor expected in a student of theology; but pressed hard with this condition as a *sine qua non*, he at length did remember a dreaming lad about the Hall, who seldom could be got to speak above his breath, even when delivering his essays, but was said to have a strong turn for drawing. This was enough for my Lord Bidmore, who contrived to obtain a sight of some of young Cargill's sketches, and was satisfied that, under such a tutor, his son could not fail to maintain that character for hereditary taste which his father and grandfather had acquired at the expense of a considerable estate, the representative value of which was now the painted canvass in the great gallery at Bidmore-House.

Upon following up the inquiry concerning the young man's character, he was found to possess all the other necessary qualifications of learning and morals, in a greater degree than perhaps Lord Bidmore might have required; and, to the astonishment of his fellow-students, but more especially to his own, Josiah Cargill was promoted to the desired and desirable situation of private tutor to the Honourable Mr Bidmore.

Mr Cargill did his duty ably and conscientiously, by a spoiled though good-humoured lad, of weak health and very ordinary parts. He could not, indeed, inspire into him any portion of the deep and noble enthusiasm which characterises the youth of genius; but he

il made such progress in each branch of his studies as his capacity enabled him to attain. He understood the learned languages, could be very profound on the subject of various readings—he studied science, and could class shells, pack mosses, and arrange minerals—he drew without taste, but with much accuracy; and though he attained no commanding height in any pursuit, he was enough of many studies, literary and scientific, to fill up his time, and divert from temptation a head which was none of the strongest in point of resistance.

Miss Augusta Bidmore, his lordship's only other child, received the instructions of Cargill in such branches of science as her father chose she should acquire, and her tutor was capable to teach. Her progress was as different from that of her brother as the fire of heaven differs from that grosser element which the peasant piles on his smouldering hearth. Her acquirements in Italian and French literature, in history, in drawing, and in all elegant learning, were such as to enchant her teacher, while at the same time it kept her on the stretch, lest, in her successful career the scholar should outstrip the master.

Alas! such intercourse, fraught as it is with dangers arising out of the best and kindest, as well as the most natural feelings on either side, proved in the present, as in many other instances, fatal to the peace of the preceptor. Every feeling heart will excuse a weakness which, we shall presently find, carried with it its own severe punishment. Cadenus, indeed, believe him who will, has assured us, that, in such a perilous intercourse, he himself preserved the limits which he unhappily transgressed by the unfortunate Vanessa, his more passionately-assioned pupil:—

“The innocent delight he took
To see the virgin mind her book,
Was but the master's secret joy,
In school to hear the finest boy.”

Josiah Cargill was less fortunate, or less cautious. He suffered his fair pupil to become inexpressibly dear to him before he discovered the precipice towards which he was moving under the direction of a blind and misplaced passion. He was indeed utterly incapable of availing himself of the opportunities afforded by his situation, to deliver his pupil in the toils of a mutual passion. Honour and gratitude alike forbade such a line of conduct, even had it been consistent with the natural bashfulness, simplicity, and innocence of his position. To sigh and suffer in secret, to form resolutions of extricating himself from a situation so fraught with danger, and to postpone from day to day the accomplishment of a resolution so arduous, was all to which the tutor found himself equal; and it is not improbable that the veneration with which he regarded his father's daughter, with the utter hopelessness of the passion which she nourished, tended to render his love yet more pure and disinterested.

At length the line of conduct, which reason had long since recommended, could no longer be the subject of procrastination. Mr Bidmore was destined to foreign travel for a twelvemonth, and Mr

Cargill received from his patron the alternative of accompanying his pupil, or retiring upon a suitable provision, the reward of his past instructions. It can hardly be doubted which he preferred for while he was with young Bidmore, he did not seem entirely separated from his sister. He was sure to hear of Augusta frequently and to see some part, at least, of the letters which she was to write to her brother; he might also hope to be remembered in these letters as her "good friend and tutor;" and to these consolations his quiet, contemplative, and yet enthusiastic disposition, clung as to a second source of pleasure, the only one which life seemed to open to him.

But fate had a blow in store, which he had not anticipated. The chance of Augusta changing her maiden condition for that of a wife was as probable as her rank, beauty, and fortune rendered such an event had never once occurred to him; and although he had imposed upon himself the unwavering belief that she never could be his, he was expressibly affected by the intelligence that she had become the property of another.

The honourable Mr Bidmore's letters to his father soon afterwards announced that poor Mr Cargill had been seized with a nervous fever, and again, that his convalescence was attended with much debility, it seemed both of mind and body, as entirely to destroy his utility as a travelling companion. Shortly after this the travellers separated, and Cargill returned to his native country alone, indulging upon the road in a melancholy abstraction of mind, which he had suffered to grow upon him since the mental shock which he had sustained, and which in time became the most characteristic feature of his demeanour. His meditations were not even disturbed by any anxiety about his future subsistence, although the cessation of his employment seemed to render that precarious. In this, however, Lord Bidmore had made provision; for, though a country comb where the fine arts were concerned, he was in other particulars a just and honourable man, who felt a sincere pride in having drawn the talents of Cargill from obscurity, and entertained due gratitude for the manner in which he had achieved the important task intrusted to him in his family.

His lordship had privately purchased from the Mowbray family the patronage or advowson of the living of St Ronan's, then held by a very old incumbent, who died shortly afterwards; so that upon arriving in England he found himself named to the vacant living. So indifferent, however, did Cargill feel himself towards this preferment, that he might possibly not have taken the trouble to go through the necessary steps previous to his ordination, had it not been for the account of his mother, now a widow, and unprovided for, unless by the support which he afforded her. He visited her in her solitary retreat in the suburbs of Marchthorn, heard her pour out her gratitude to Heaven that she should have been granted life long enough to witness her son's promotion to a charge, which, in her eyes, was more honourable and desirable than an Episcopal see—heard her chalk out the life which they were to lead together in the humble independence which had thus fallen on him—he heard all this, and had no power to crush her hopes and her triumph by the indulgence

his own romantic feelings. He passed almost mechanically through the usual forms, and was inducted into the living of St Ronan's.

Although fanciful and romantic, it was not in Josiah Cargill's nature to yield to unavailing melancholy; yet he sought relief, not in society, but in solitary study. His seclusion was the more complete, that his mother, whose education had been as much confined to her fortunes, felt awkward under her new dignities, and willingly quiesced in her son's secession from society, and spent her whole time in superintending the little household, and in her way providing for all emergencies, the occurrence of which might call Josiah out of his favourite book-room. As old age rendered her inactive, she began to regret the incapacity of her son to superintend his own household, and talked something of matrimony, and the mysteries of the muckle wheel. To these admonitions Mr Cargill returned only slight and evasive answers; and when the old lady slept in the village churchyard, at a reverend old age, there was no one to perform the office of superintendent in the minister's family. Neither did Josiah Cargill seek for any, but patiently submitted to all the evils with which a bachelor estate is attended, and which were at least equal to those which beset the renowned Mago-Pico during his state of celibacy.¹ His butter was ill churned, and declared by all but himself to be the quean who made it, altogether uneatable; his milk was rancid in the pan, his fruit and vegetables were stolen, and his black stockings mended with blue and white thread.

For all these things the minister cared not, his mind ever bent on far different matters. Do not let my fair readers do Josiah more than justice, or suppose that, like Beltebros in the desert, he remained for years the victim of an unfortunate and misplaced passion. No—to the shame of the male sex be it spoken, that no degree of hopeless love, however desperate and sincere, can ever continue years to embitter life. There must be hope—there must be uncertainty—there must be reciprocity, to enable the tyrant of the soul to secure a dominion of very long duration over a manly and well-constituted mind, which is itself desirous to *will* its freedom. The memory of Augusta had long faded from Josiah's thoughts, or was remembered only as a pleasing, but melancholy and unsubstantial dream, while he was straining forward in pursuit of a yet nobler and purer mistress, in a word, of Knowledge herself.

Every hour that he could spare from his parochial duties, which he discharged with zeal honourable to his heart and head, was devoted to his studies, and spent among his books. But this chase of wisdom, though in itself interesting and dignified, was indulged to an excess which diminished the respectability, nay, the utility, of the deceived student; and he forgot, amid the luxury of deep and dark investigations, that society has its claims, and that the knowledge which is imparted, is necessarily a barren talent, and is lost to society, like the miser's concealed hoard, by the death of the proprietor. His studies were also under the additional disadvantage that, being pur-

¹ See Note D. *Mago-Pico*.

sued for the gratification of a desultory longing after knowledge, and directed to no determined object, they turned on points rather curious than useful, and while they served for the amusement of the student himself, promised little utility to mankind at large.

Bewildered amid abstruse researches, metaphysical and historical, Mr Cargill, living only for himself and his books, acquired many ludicrous habits, which exposed the secluded student to the ridicule of the world, and which tinged, though they did not altogether obscure, the natural civility of an amiable disposition, as well as the acquired habits of politeness which he had learned in the good society that frequented Lord Bidmore's mansion. He not only indulged in neglect of dress and appearance, and all those ungainly tricks which men are apt to acquire by living very much alone, but besides, and especially, he became probably the most abstracted and absent member of a profession peculiarly liable to cherish such habits. No man fell so regularly into the painful dilemma of mistaking, or, in Scott's phrase, *miskennning*, the person he spoke to, or more frequently inquired of an old maid for her husband, of a childless wife about her young people, of the distressed widower for the spouse at whose funeral he himself had assisted but a fortnight before; and none was ever more familiar with strangers whom he had never seen, or seemed more estranged from those who had a title to think themselves well known to him. The worthy man perpetually confounded sex, age, and calling; and when a blind beggar extended his hand for charity, he has been known to return the civility by taking off his hat, making a low bow, and hoping his worship was well.

Among his brethren, Mr Cargill alternately commanded respect from the depth of his erudition, and gave occasion to laughter from his odd peculiarities. On the latter occasions he used abruptly to withdraw from the ridicule he had provoked; for notwithstanding the general mildness of his character, his solitary habits had engendered a testy impatience of contradiction, and a keener sense of pain arising from the satire of others, than was natural to his unassuming disposition. As for his parishioners, they enjoyed, as may reasonably be supposed, many a hearty laugh at their pastor's expense, and were sometimes, as Mrs Dod's hinted, more astonished than edified by his learning; for in pursuing a point of biblical criticism, he did not altogether remember that he was addressing a popular and unlearned assembly, not delivering a *concio ad clerum*—a mistake, arising from any conceit of his learning, or wish to display it, but from the same absence of mind which induced an excellent division when preaching before a party of criminals condemned to death, to break off by promising the wretches, who were to suffer next morning, "the rest of the discourse at the first proper opportunity." In all the neighbourhood acknowledged Mr Cargill's serious and devoted discharge of his ministerial duties; and the poor parishioners forgave his innocent peculiarities, in consideration of his unbounded charity; while the heritors, if they ridiculed the abstractions of Mr Cargill on some subjects, had the grace to recollect that they had prevented him from suing an augmentation of stipend, according to the fashion of the clergy around him, or from demanding at the

nds a new manse, or the repair of the old one. He once, indeed, shed that they would amend the roof of his book-room, which rained in"¹ in a very pluvius manner; but receiving no direct answer from our friend Meiklewham, who neither relished the proposal nor saw means of eluding it, the minister quietly made the necessary repairs at his own expense, and gave the heritors no farther trouble on the subject.

Such was the worthy divine whom our *bon vivant* at the Cleikum hoped to conciliate by a good dinner and Cockburn's particular; an excellent menstruum in most cases, but not likely to be very efficacious on the present occasion.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ACQUAINTANCE.

'Twixt us thus the difference trims:—

Using head instead of limbs,

You have read what I have seen;

Using limbs instead of head,

I have seen what you have read—

Which way does the balance lean?

BUTLER.

OUR traveller, rapid in all his resolutions and motions, strode swiftly down the street, and arrived at the Manse, which was, as we have already described it, all but absolutely ruinous. The total isolation, and want of order about the door, would have argued the place uninhabited, had it not been for two or three miserable tubs with suds, or suchlike sluttish contents, which were left there, that those who broke their shins among them might receive a sensible proof that "here the hand of woman had been." The door being off its hinges, the entrance was for the time protected by a broken harrow, which must necessarily be removed before entry could be obtained. The little garden, which might have given an air of comfort to the old house, had it been kept in any order, was abandoned to a desolation, of which that of the sluggard was only a type; and the minister's man, an attendant always proverbial for doing half work, and who seemed in the present instance to do none, was seen among docks and nettles, solacing himself with the few roseberries which remained on some moss-grown bushes. To him Mr Touchwood called loudly, inquiring after his master; but the man, conscious of being taken in flagrant delict, as the law says, fled from him like a guilty thing, instead of obeying his summons, and was soon heard *hupping* and *geeing* to the cart, which he had taken on the other side of the broken wall.

Disappointed in his application to the man-servant, Mr Touchwood tapped with his cane, at first gently, then harder, hollowed, bel-

¹ *Scotticé*, for "admitted the rain."

lowed, and shouted, in the hope of calling the attention of some one within doors, but received not a word in reply. At length, thinking that no trespass could be committed upon so forlorn and deserted an establishment, he removed the obstacles to entrance with such noise as he thought must necessarily have alarmed some one, there was any live person about the house at all. All was still silent, and, entering a passage where the damp walls and broken flags corresponded to the appearance of things out of doors, he opened a door to the left, which, wonderful to say, still had a latch remaining, and found himself in the parlour, and in the presence of the person whom he came to visit.

Amid a heap of books and other literary lumber, which had accumulated around him, sat, in his well-worn leathern elbow-chair, the learned minister of St Ronan's; a thin, spare man, beyond the middle age, of a dark complexion, but with eyes which, though not obscured and vacant, had been once bright, soft, and expressive, and whose features seemed interesting, the rather that, notwithstanding the carelessness of his dress, he was in the habit of performing his ablutions with Eastern precision; for he had forgot neatness, but not cleanliness. His hair might have appeared much more disorderedly, had it not been thinned by time, and disposed chiefly around the sides of his countenance and the back part of his head; black stockings, ungartered, marked his professional dress, and his feet were thrust into old slipshod shoes, which served him instead of slippers. The rest of his garments, so far as visible, consisted in a plaid nightgown wrapt in long folds round his stooping and emaciated length of body, and reaching down to the slippers aforesaid. He was so intently engaged in studying the book before him, a folio of no ordinary bulk, that he totally disregarded the noise which Mr Touchwood made in entering the room, as well as the coughs and hems with which he thought it proper to announce his presence.

No notice being taken of these inarticulate signals, Mr Touchwood, however great an enemy he was to ceremony, saw the necessity of introducing his business as an apology for his intrusion.

"Hem! sir—Ha, hem!—You see before you a person in some distress for want of society, who has taken the liberty to call on you as a good pastor, who may be, in Christian charity, willing to afford him a little of your company, since he is tired of his own."

Of this speech, Mr Cargill only understood the words "distress" and "charity," sounds with which he was well acquainted, and which never failed to produce some effect upon him. He looked at his visitor with lack-lustre eye, and, without correcting the first opinion which he had formed, although the stranger's plump and sturdy frame, as well as his nicely-brushed coat, glancing cane, and, above all, his upright and self-satisfied manner, resembled in no respect the dress, form, or bearing of a mendicant, he quietly thrust a shilling into his hand, and relapsed into the studious contemplation which the entrance of Touchwood had interrupted.

"Upon my word, my good sir," said his visitor, surprised at a degree of absence of mind which he could hardly have conceived possible, "you have entirely mistaken my object."

"I am sorry my mite is insufficient, my friend," said the clergyman, without again raising his eyes, "it is all I have at present to bestow." If you will have the kindness to look up for a moment, my good friend," said the traveller, "you may possibly perceive that you labour under a considerable mistake."

Mr Cargill raised his head, recalled his attention, and, seeing that he had a well-dressed, respectable-looking person before him, he examined in much confusion, "Ha!—yes—on my word, I was so impressed in my book—I believe—I think I have the pleasure to see a worthy friend, Mr Lavender?"

"No such thing, Mr Cargill," replied Mr Touchwood. "I will not give you the trouble of trying to recollect me—you never saw me before.—But do not let me disturb your studies—I am in no hurry, my business can wait your leisure."

"I am much obliged," said Mr Cargill; "have the goodness to take a chair, if you can find one—I have a train of thought to follow—over—a slight calculation to finish—and then I am at your command."

The visitor found among the broken furniture, not without difficulty, a seat strong enough to support his weight, and sat down, leaning upon his cane, and looking attentively at his host, who very soon became totally insensible of his presence. A long pause of complete silence ensued, only disturbed by the rustling leaves of the book from which Mr Cargill seemed to be making extracts, and now and then by a little exclamation of surprise and impatience, when he dipped his pen, as happened once or twice, into his snuff-box, or the head of the inkstand which stood beside it. At length, just as Mr Touchwood began to think the scene as tedious as it was singular, the abstracted student raised his head, and spoke as if in soliloquy, "From Acon, Accor, or St John d'Acre, to Jerusalem, how far?"

"Twenty-three miles north north-west," answered his visitor, without hesitation.

Mr Cargill expressed no more surprise at a question which he had put to himself being answered by the voice of another, than if he had asked the distance on the map, and, indeed, was not probably aware of the medium through which his question had been solved; and it was the tenor of the answer alone which he attended to in his reply. "Twenty-three miles—Ingulphus," laying his hand on the volume, "and Jeffrey Winesauf do not agree in this."

"They may both be d—d, then, for lying blockheads," answered the traveller.

"You might have contradicted their authority, sir, without using such an expression," said the divine, gravely.

"I cry your mercy, Doctor," said Mr Touchwood; "but would you compare these parchment fellows with me, that have made my legs compasses over great part of the inhabited world?"

"You have been in Palestine, then?" said Mr Cargill, drawing himself upright in his chair, and speaking with eagerness and without rest.

"You may swear that, Doctor, and at Acre too. Why, I was there

the month after Boney had found it too hard a nut to crack.—I din with Sir Sydney's chum, old Djezzar Pacha, and an excellent dinner we had, but for a dessert of noses and ears brought on after the last remove, which spoiled my digestion. Old Djezzar thought is so good a joke, that you hardly saw a man in Acre whose face was not as fair as the palm of my hand—Gad, I respect my olfactory organ, and set off the next morning as fast as the most cursed hard trotting dromedary that ever fell to poor pilgrim's lot could contrive to tramp."

"If you have really been in the Holy Land, sir," said Mr Cargill, whom the reckless gaiety of Touchwood's manner rendered somewhat suspicious of a trick, "you will be able materially to enlighten me on the subject of the Crusades."

"They happened before my time, Doctor," replied the traveller.

"You are to understand that my curiosity refers to the geography of the countries where these events took place," answered Mr Cargill.

"Oh! as to that matter, you are lighted on your feet," said Mr Touchwood; "for the time present I can fit you. Turk, Arab, Cochin, and Druse, I know every one of them, and can make you as well acquainted with them as myself. Without stirring a step beyond your threshold, you shall know Syria as well as I do.—But one good turn deserves another—in that case, you must have the goodness to dine with me."

"I go seldom abroad, sir," said the minister, with a good deal of hesitation, for his habits of solitude and seclusion could not be so entirely overcome, even by the expectation raised by the traveller's course; "yet I cannot deny myself the pleasure of waiting on a gentleman possessed of so much experience."

"Well, then," said Mr Touchwood, "three be the hour—I need not dine later, and always to a minute—and the place, the Cleikum I will find up the way; where Mrs Dods is at this moment busy in making ready such a dinner as your learning has seldom seen, Doctor, for I brought the receipts from the four different quarters of the globe."

Upon this treaty they parted; and Mr Cargill, after musing for a short while upon the singular chance which had sent a living man to answer those doubts for which he was in vain consulting ancient authorities, at length resumed, by degrees, the train of reflection and investigation which Mr Touchwood's visit had interrupted, and in a short time lost all recollection of his episodical visitor, and of the engagement which he had formed.

Not so Mr Touchwood, who, when not occupied with business of real importance, had the art, as the reader may have observed, to make a prodigious fuss about nothing at all. Upon the present occasion, he bustled in and out of the kitchen, till Mrs Dods lost patience and threatened to pin the dishcloth to his tail; a menace which he pardoned, in consideration, that in all the countries which he had visited, which are sufficiently civilised to boast of cooks, these artists toiling in their fiery element, have a privilege to be testy and impatient. He therefore retreated from the torrid region of Mrs Dods's microcosm, and employed his time in the usual devices of loitering, partly by walking for an appetite, partly by observing the progress of his watch towards three o'clock, when he had happily succeeded

ting an employment more serious. His table, in the blue parlour, was displayed with two covers, after the fairest fashion of the Cleikum; yet the landlady, with a look "civil but sly," contrived to insinuate doubt whether the clergyman would come, "when a' was dune." Mr Touchwood scorned to listen to such an insinuation until the hour arrived, and brought with it no Mr Cargill. The impatient entertainer allowed five minutes for difference of clocks, and variation of time, and other five for the procrastination of one who lent little into society. But no sooner were the last five minutes expended, than he darted off for the Manse, not, indeed, much like a greyhound or a deer, but with the momentum of a corpulent and ill-appetised elderly gentleman, who is in haste to secure his dinner. He bounced without ceremony into the parlour, where he found the worthy divine clothed in the same plaid night-gown, and seated in the very same elbow-chair, in which he had left him five hours before. His sudden entrance recalled to Mr Cargill, not an accurate, but something of a general recollection, of what had passed in the morning, and he hastened to apologise with "Ha!—indeed—already?—on my word, Mr A—a—, I mean my dear friend—I am afraid I have used you ill—I forgot to order any dinner—but we will do our best.—Eppie—Eppie?"

Not at the first, second, nor third call, but *ex intervallo*, as the lawyers express it, Eppie, a bare-legged, shock-headed, thick-ankled, ill-armed wench, entered, and announced her presence by an emphatic, "What's your wull?"

"Have you got anything in the house for dinner, Eppie?"

"Naething but bread and milk, plenty o't—what should I have?"

"You see, sir," said Mr Cargill, "you are like to have a Pythæorean entertainment; but you are a traveller, and have doubtless been in your time thankful for bread and milk."

"But never when there was anything better to be had," said Mr Touchwood. "Come, Doctor, I beg your pardon, but your wits are really gone a wool-gathering; it was *I* invited *you* to dinner, up at the Inn yonder, not you me."

"On my word, and so it was," said Mr Cargill; "I knew I was quite right—I knew there was a dinner engagement betwixt us, I am sure of that, and that is the main point.—Come, sir, I wait upon you."

"Will you not first change your dress?" said the visitor, seeing with astonishment that the divine proposed to attend him in his plaid night-gown; "why, we shall have all the boys in the village after us if you will look like an owl in sunshine, and they will flock round you like so many hedge-sparrows."

"I will get my clothes instantly," said the worthy clergyman; "I will get ready directly—I am really ashamed to keep you waiting, my dear Mr—eh—eh—your name has this instant escaped me."

"It is Touchwood, sir, at your service; I do not believe you ever heard it before," answered the traveller.

"True—right—no more I have—well, my good Mr Touchstone, will you sit down an instant until we see what we can do?—strange ways we make ourselves to these bodies of ours, Mr Touchstone—

the clothing and the sustaining of them costs us much thought and leisure, which might be better employed in catering for the wants of our immortal spirits."

Mr Touchwood thought in his heart that never had Brahmin Gymnosophist less reason to reproach himself with excess in the indulgence of the table, or of the toilette, than the sage before him; but he assented to the doctrine, as he would have done to any minor heresy, rather than protract matters by farther discussing the point at present. In a short time the minister was dressed in his Sunday suit, without any farther mistake than turning one of his black stockings inside out; and Mr Touchwood, happy as was Boswell when carried off Dr Johnson in triumph to dine with Strachan and John Wilkes, had the pleasure of escorting him to the Cleikum Inn.

In the course of the afternoon they became more familiar, and the familiarity led to them forming a considerable estimate of each other's powers and acquirements. It is true, the traveller thought the student too pedantic, too much attached to systems, which, formed in solitude, he was unwilling to renounce, even when contradicted by the voice and testimony of experience; and, moreover, considered his utter inattention to the quality of what he ate and drank, as unworthy of a rational, that is, of a cooking creature, or of a being who, as defined by Johnson, holds his dinner as the most important business of the day. Cargill did not act up to this definition, and was, therefore, in the eyes of his new acquaintance, so far ignorant and uncivilised. What then? He was still a sensible, intelligent man, however abstemious and bookish.

On the other hand, the divine could not help regarding his new friend as something of an epicure or belly-god, nor could he observe in him either the perfect education, or the polished bearing, which mark the gentleman of rank, and of which, while he mingled with the world, he had become a competent judge. Neither did it escape him, that in the catalogue of Mr Touchwood's defects, occurred two of many travellers, a slight disposition to exaggerate his own personal adventures, and to prose concerning his own exploits. Then, his acquaintance with Eastern manners, existing now in the same state in which they were found during the time of the Crusades, formed a living commentary on the works of William of Tyre, Richard of Saint Giles, the Moslem annals of Abulfaragi, and other historians of the dark period, with which his studies were at present occupied.

A friendship, a companionship at least, was therefore struck hastily betwixt these two originals; and to the astonishment of the whole parish of St Ronan's, the minister thereof was seen once more leagued and united with an individual of his species, generally called among them the Cleikum Nabob. Their intercourse sometimes consisted in long walks, which they took in company, traversing however, as limited a space of ground as if it had been actually reserved for their pedestrian exercise. Their parade was, according to circumstances, a low haugh at the nether end of the ruinous hamlet or the esplanade in front of the old castle; and, in either case, the direct longitude of their promenade never exceeded a hundred yards.

ometimes, but rarely, the divine took share of Mr Touchwood's
al, though less splendidly set forth than when he was first invited
partake of it; for, like the unostentatious owner of the gold cup
Parnell's Hermit,

—"Still he welcomed, but with less of cost."

these occasions the conversation was not of the regular and
packed nature which passes betwixt men, as they are ordinarily
ned, of this world. On the contrary, the one party was often think-
of Saladin and Cœur de Lion, when the other was haranguing on
ler Ali and Sir Eyre Coote. Still, however, the one spoke and
other seemed to listen; and, perhaps, the lighter intercourse of
ety, where amusement is the sole object, can scarcely rest on a
r and more secure basis.

was on one of the evenings when the learned divine had taken
place at Mr Touchwood's social board, or rather at Mrs Dods's,
r a cup of excellent tea, the only luxury which Mr Cargill con-
ed to partake of with some complacency, was the regale before
n,—that a card was delivered to the Nabob.

Mr and Miss Mowbray see company at Shaws-Castle, on the
ntieth current, at two o'clock—a *déjeuner*—dresses in character
itted—"A dramatic picture."—"See company? the more fools
," he continued, by way of comment. "See company?—choice
ases are ever commendable—and this piece of pasteboard is to inti-
e that one may go and meet all the fools of the parish, if they
e a mind—in my time they asked the honour or the pleasure of a
nger's company. I suppose, by-and-by, we shall have in this
ntry the ceremonial of a Bedouin's tent, where every ragged
gi, with his green turban, comes in slap without leave asked, and
his black paw among the rice, with no other apology than Salam
um.—'Dresses in character—Dramatic picture'—what new tom-
ery can that be?—but it does not signify.—Doctor! I say, Doc-
—but he is in the seventh heaven—I say, Mother Dods, you who
w all the news—Is this the feast that was put off until Miss
vbray should be better?"

Troth is it, Maister Touchwood—they are no in the way of giving
entertainments in one season—no very wise to gie ane maybe—
they ken best."

I say, Doctor, Doctor!—Bless his five wits, he is charging the
lemah with stout King Richard—I say, Doctor, do you know
hing of these Mowbrays?"

Nothing extremely particular," answered Mr Cargill, after a
se; "it is an ordinary tale of greatness, which blazes in one
ury and is extinguished in the next. I think Camden says that
mas Mowbray, who was Grand-Marshal of England, succeeded
at high office, as well as to the Dukedom of Norfolk, as grand-
of Roger Bigot, in 1301."

Pshaw, man, you are back into the 14th century—I mean these
vbrays of St Ronan's—now, don't fall asleep again until you
e answered my question—and don't look so like a startled hare—
a speaking no treason."

The clergyman floundered a moment, as is usual with an ab man who is recovering the train of his ideas, or a somnambulist w he is suddenly awakened, and then answered, still with hesitation

"Mowbray of St Ronan's?—ha—eh—I know—that is—I did k the family."

"Here they are going to give a masquerade, a *bal paré*, pri theatricals, I think, and what not," handing him the card.

"I saw something of this a fortnight ago," said Mr Cargill; deed, I either had a ticket myself, or I saw such a one as that."

"Are you sure you did not attend the party, Doctor?" said Nabob.

"Who attend? I? you are jesting, Mr Touchwood."

"But are you quite positive?" demanded Mr Touchwood, who observed, to his infinite amusement, that the learned and abstra scholar was so conscious of his own peculiarities, as never to be sure on any such subject.

"Positive!" he repeated with embarrassment; "my memory wretched that I never like to be positive—but had I done anyt so far out of my usual way I must have remembered it, one w think—and—I *am* positive I was not there."

"Neither could you, Doctor," said the Nabob, laughing at the cess by which his friend reasoned himself into confidence; "f did not take place—it was adjourned, and this is the second invita —there will be one for you, as you had a card to the former.—C Doctor, you must go—you and I will go together—I as an Imau I can say my Bismillah with any Hadgi of them all—You as a ca nal, or what you like best."

"Who, I? it is unbecoming my station, Mr Touchwood," said clergyman—"a folly altogether inconsistent with my habits."

"All the better—you shall change your habits."

"You had better gang up and see them, Mr Cargill," said Dods; "for it's maybe the last sight ye may see of Miss Mowbr they say she is to be married and off to England ane of thae come-shortlies, wi' some of the gowks about the Waal down-by."

"Married!" said the clergyman; "it is impossible!"

"But where's the impossibility, Mr Cargill, when ye see folk m every day, and buckle them yoursell into the bargain!—Mayb think the puir lassie has a bee in her bannet; but ye ken yours naebody but wise folk were to marry the world wad be ill people think it's the wise folk that keep single, like yoursell and me Cargill.—Gude guide us!—are ye weel?—will ye taste a dra something?"

"Sniff at my ottar of roses," said Mr Touchwood; "the s would revive the dead—why, what in the devil's name is the mea of this?—you were quite well just now."

"A sudden qualm," said Mr Cargill, recovering himself.

"Oh! Mr Cargill," said Dame Dods, "this comes of your fasts."

"Right, dame," subjoined Mr Touchwood; "and of breaking t with sour milk and pease bannock—the least morsel of Christian is rejected by the stomach, just as a small gentleman refuses the

creditable neighbour, lest he see the nakedness of the land—ha!”

And there is really a talk of Miss Mowbray of St Ronan's being married?” said the clergyman.

“Troth is there,” said the dame; “its Trotting Nelly's news; and though she likes a drappie, I dinna think she would invent a lee or a lane—at least to me, that am a gude customer.”

This must be looked to,” said Mr Cargill, as if speaking to him-

self. “Troth, and so it should,” said Dame Dods; “it's a sin and a shame if they should employ the tinkling cymbal they ca' Chatterly, or sic a Presbyterian trumpet as yoursell in the land, Mr Cargill; if ye will take a fule's advice, ye winna let the multure be ta'en in our ain mill, Mr Cargill.”

“True, true, good Mother Dods,” said the Nabob; “gloves and hats are things to be looked after, and Mr Cargill had better go to this cursed festivity with me, in order to see after his own best.”

“I must speak with the young lady,” said the clergyman, still in a study.

“Right, right, my boy of blackletter,” said the Nabob; “with me shall go, and we'll bring them to submission to mother church, I warrant you—Why, the idea of being cheated in such a way, would drive a Santon out of his trance.—What dress will you wear?”

“My own, to be sure,” said the divine, starting from his reverie.

“True, thou art right again—they may want to knit the knot on foot, and who would be married by a parson in masquerade?—as to the entertainment though—it is a done thing.”

The clergyman assented, provided he should receive an invitation; and as that was found at the Manse, he had no excuse for retracting, if he had seemed to desire one.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FORTUNE'S FROLICS.

Mr Basset. We gentlemen, whose carriages run on the four aces, are apt to have a little out of order.

The Provoked Husband.

Our history must now look a little backwards; and although it is foreign to our natural style of composition, it must speak more narrative and less in dialogue, rather telling what happened, than acting upon the actors. Our promise, however, is only conditional for we foresee temptations which may render it difficult for us to keep it.

The arrival of the young Earl of Etherington at the salutiferous Manse of St Ronan's had produced the strongest sensation, especially as it was joined with the singular accident of the attempt upon

his lordship's person, as he took a short cut through the woods on foot, at a distance from his equipage and servants. The gallantry with which he beat off the highwayman was only equal to his generosity; for he declined making any researches after the poor fellow, although his lordship had received a severe wound in the scuffle.

Of the "three black Graces," as they have been termed by our poets, the most pleasing companions of our time, Law and Physic have agreed to do homage to Lord Etherington, represented by Mr Meiklewham and Dr Quackleben; while Divinity, as favourable, though more in the person of the Reverend Mr Simon Chatterly, stood on tip-toe to offer any service in her power.

For the honourable reason already assigned, his lordship, after thanking Mr Meiklewham, and hinting that he might have different occasions for his services, declined his offer to search out the doctor by whom he had been wounded; while to the care of the Doctor he subjected the cure of a smart flesh-wound in the arm, together with a slight scratch on the temple; and so very genteel was his behaviour on the occasion, that the Doctor, in his anxiety for his safety, enjoined him a month's course of the waters, if he would enjoy the comfort of a complete and perfect recovery. Nothing so frequently could he assure his lordship, as the opening of cicatrised wounds, and the waters of St Ronan's spring being, according to Dr Quackleben, a remedy for all the troubles which flesh is heir to, could not fail to equal those of Barege, in facilitating the discharge of splinters or extraneous matter, which a bullet may chance to incorporate with the human frame, to its great annoyance. For he would not say, that although he could not declare the waters which he patronised to be an absolute *panphamarcon*, yet he would, with voice and pen, maintain that they possessed the principal virtues of the most celebrated medicinal springs in the known world. In spite of the love of Alpheus for Arethusa was a mere jest, compared to which the Doctor entertained for his favourite fountain.

The new and noble guest, whose arrival so much illustrated the scenes of convalescence and of gaiety, was not at first seen so much at the ordinary, and other places of public resort, as had been the case of the worthy company assembled. His health and his wound provided an excuse for making his visits to society few and far between.

But, when he did appear, his manners and person were infinitely captivating; and even the carnation-coloured silk handkerchief which suspended his wounded arm, together with the paleness and languor which loss of blood had left on his handsome and noble countenance, gave a grace to the whole person, which many of the ladies declared irresistible. All contended for his notice, attracted at once by his affability, and piqued by the calm and easy nonchalance with which it seemed to be blended. The scheming and self-seeking Mowbray, the coarse-minded and brutal Sir Bingo, accustomed to consider themselves, and to be considered as the first men of the party, sunk into comparative insignificance. But chiefly Lady Ffelope threw out the captivations of her wit and her literature; and Lady Binks, trusting to her natural charms, endeavoured equally to attract his notice. The other nymphs of the Spaw held a little back.

the principle of that politeness which, at continental hunting parties, affords the first shot at a fine piece of game to the person of highest rank present; but the thought throbbed in many a fair mind, that their ladyships might miss their aim, in spite of the advantages thus allowed them, and that there might then be room for exalted, but perhaps not less skilful, markswomen, to try their ace.

While the Earl thus withdrew from public society, it was necessary, at least natural, that he should choose some one with whom to share the solitude of his own apartment; and Mowbray, superior in rank to the half-pay whisky-drinking Captain MacTurk, dashed to Winterblossom, who was broken down, and turned twaddler—and in tact and sense to Sir Bingo Binks—easily manœuvred himself into his lordship's more intimate society; and internally making the honest footpad, whose bullet had been the indirect means of secluding his intended victim from all society but his own, gradually began to feel the way, and prove the strength of his antagonist, at the various games of skill and hazard which he introduced, apparently with the sole purpose of relieving the tedium of a chamber.

Meiklewham, who felt, or affected, the greatest possible interest in his patron's success, and who watched every opportunity to inquire how his schemes advanced, received at first such favourable accounts that he made him grin from ear to ear, rub his hands, and chuckle forth in bursts of glee as only the success of triumphant roguery could be extorted from him. Mowbray looked grave, however, and checked his mirth.

"There was something in it after all," he said, "that he could not perfectly understand. Etherington, an used hand—d—d sharp—up everything, and yet he lost his money like a baby."

"And what the matter how he loses it, so you win it like a man?" said his legal friend and adviser.

"Why, hang it, I cannot tell," replied Mowbray—"were it not that I think he has scarce the impudence to propose such a thing to succeed, curse me but I should think he was coming the old soldier for me, and keeping up his game.—But no—he can scarce have the impudence to think of that.—I find, however, that he has done the verine—cleaned out poor Tom—though Tom wrote to me the precise contrary, yet the truth has since come out—Well, I shall forgive him, for I see his lordship is to be had as well as other folks." "Weel, Mr Mowbray," said the lawyer, in a tone of affected sympathy, "ye ken your own ways best—but the heavens will bless a moderate mind. I would not like to see you ruin this poor lad, *ditus*, that is to say, out and out.—To lose some of the ready will him no great harm, and maybe give him a lesson he may be the better of as long as he lives—but I wad not, as an honest man, wish to go deeper—you should spare the lad, Mr Mowbray."

"Who spared *me*, Meiklewham?" said Mowbray, with a look and tone of deep emphasis—"No, no—he must go through the mill—pay and money's worth.—His seat is called Oakendale—think of it, Mick—Oakendale! Oh, name of thrice happy augury!—Speak

not of mercy, Mick—the squirrels of Oakendale must be dismount and learn to go a-foot.—What mercy can the wandering lord of T expect among the Greeks?—The Greeks!—I am a very Suliote—bravest of Greeks.

‘ I think not of pity, I think not of fear,
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier.’

And necessity, Mick,” he concluded, with a tone something altered, “necessity is as unrelenting a leader as any Vizier or Pacha, who Scanderbeg ever fought with, or Byron has sung.”

Meiklewham echoed his patron’s ejaculation with a sound between a whine, a chuckle, and a groan; the first being designed to express his pretended pity for the destined victim; the second his sympathy with his patron’s prospects of success; and the third being a warning admonitory of the dangerous courses through which his object was to be pursued.

Suliote as he boasted himself, Mowbray had, soon after this conversation, some reason to admit that,

“ When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.”

The light skirmishing betwixt the parties was ended, and the serious battle commenced with some caution on either side; each perfectly desirous of being master of his opponent’s system of tactics, before exposing his own. Piquet, the most beautiful game at which a man can make sacrifice of his fortune, was one in which Mowbray had, for his misfortune perhaps, been accounted, from an early age, a great proficient, and in which the Earl of Etherington, with long experience, proved no novice. They now played for such stakes as Mowbray’s state of fortune rendered considerable to him, though his antagonist appeared not to regard the amount. And they played with various success; for, though Mowbray at times returned with a smile of confidence the inquiring looks of his friend Meiklewham, there were other occasions on which he seemed to evade them, as if his own had a sad confession to make in reply.

These alternations, though frequent, did not occupy, after all, many days; for Mowbray, a friend of all hours, spent much of his time in Lord Etherington’s apartment, and these few days were days of battle. In the mean time, as his lordship was now sufficiently recovered to join the party at Shaws-Castle, and Miss Mowbray’s health being announced as restored, that proposal was renewed, with the addition of a dramatic entertainment, the nature of which we shall afterwards have occasion to explain. Cards were anew issued to all those who had been formerly included in the invitation, and of course to Mr Touchwood, as formerly a resident at the Well, now in the neighbourhood; it being previously agreed among the ladies, that a Nabob, though sometimes a dingy or damaged commodity, was not to be rashly or unnecessarily neglected. As to the parson, he had been asked, of course, as an old acquaintance of the Mowbray house, not to be left out when the friends of the family were invited on a great scale; but his habits were well known,

as no more expected that he would leave his manse on such an occasion, than that the kirk should loosen itself from its foundations. It was after these arrangements had been made that the Laird of Ronan's suddenly entered Meiklewham's private apartment with airs of exultation. The worthy scribe turned his spectacled nose towards his patron, and holding in one hand the bunch of papers which he had been just perusing, and in the other the tape with which he was about to tie them up again, suspended that operation to await the open eyes and ears the communication of Mowbray.

"I have done him!" he said, exultingly, yet in a tone of voice lowered almost to a whisper; "capoted his lordship for this bout—bled my capital, Mick, and something more.—Hush, don't interrupt me—we must think of Clara now—she must share the sunshine, and it will prove but a blink before a storm.—You know, Mick, these d—d women, Lady Penelope and the Binks, have settled that they will have something like a *bal paré* on this occasion, a sort of theatrical exhibition, and that those who like it shall be dressed in character.—I know their meaning—they think Clara has no dress fit for such foolery, and so they hope to eclipse her; Lady Pen, with her fashionably ill-set diamonds, and my Lady Binks, with the new-fashioned finery which she swopt her character for. But Clara shan't come down so, by —! I got that affected slut, Lady Binks's word, to tell me what her mistress had set her mind on, and she is to wear a Grecian habit, forsooth, like one of Will Allan's Eastern subs. But here's the rub—there is only one shawl for sale in Edinburgh that is worth showing off in, and that is at the Gallery of Fashion. Now, Mick, my friend, that shawl must be had for Clara, and the other trankums of muslin, and lace, and so forth, which you find marked in the paper there.—Send instantly and secure it; as Lady Binks writes by to-morrow's post, your order can go by to-morrow's mail—There is a note for £100.

From a mechanical habit of never refusing anything, Meiklewham readily took the note, but having looked at it through his spectacles, continued to hold it in his hand as he remonstrated with his patron. "This is a' very kindly meant, St Ronan's—very kindly meant; I wad be the last to say that Miss Clara does not merit respect and kindness at your hand; but I doubt mickle if she wad care a penny for thae braw things. Ye ken yoursell, she seldom alters her notions. Od, she thinks her riding habit dress eneugh for ony company; and if you were ganging by good looks, so it is—if she had aught mair colour, poor dear."

"Well, well," said Mowbray, impatiently, "let me alone to recon-struct a woman and a fine dress."

"To be sure, ye ken best," said the writer; "but, after a', now, it canna be better to lay by this hundred pound in Tam Turnpenny's, and see the young lady should want it afterhand, just for a sair foot?" "You are a fool, Mick; what signifies healing a sore foot, when there will be a broken heart in the case?—No, no—get the things as I direct you—we will blaze them down for one day at least; perhaps it will be the beginning of a proper dash."

"Weel, weel, I wish it may be so," answered Meiklewham; "but

this young Earl—hae ye found the weak point?—Can ye get a cerniture against him, with expenses?—that is the question.”

“I wish I could answer it,” said Mowbray, thoughtfully.—“I found the fellow—he is a cut above me in rank and in society too belongs to the great clubs, and is in with the Superlatives and Incessibles, and all that sort of folk. My training has been a peg low—but, hang it, there are better dogs bred in the kennel than in the parlour. I am up to him, I think—at least I will soon know, whether I am or no, and that is always one comfort. Never mind, do you execute my commission, and take care you name no name. I must save my little Abigail’s reputation.”

They parted, Meiklewham to execute his patron’s commission—patron to bring to the test those hopes, the uncertainty of which could not disguise from his own sagacity.

Trusting to the continuance of his run of luck, Mowbray resolved to bring affairs to a crisis that same evening. Everything seemed the outset to favour his purpose. They had dined together in Lord Etherington’s apartments—his state of health interfered with the circulation of the bottle, and a drizzly autumnal evening rendered walking disagreeable, even had they gone no farther than the private stable where Lord Etherington’s horses were kept, under the care of a groom of superior skill. Cards were naturally, almost necessarily resorted to, as the only alternative for helping away the evening and piquet was, as formerly, chosen for the game.

Lord Etherington seemed at first indolently careless and indifferent about his play, suffering advantages to escape him, of which, in a more attentive state of mind, he could not have failed to avail himself. Mowbray upraised him with his inattention, and proposed a deeper stake, in order to interest him. The young nobleman complied; and in the course of a few hands the gamesters became deeply engaged in watching and profiting by the changes of fortune. These were so many, so varied, and so unexpected, that the very souls of the players seemed at length centred in the event of the struggle; and, by dint of doubling stakes, the accumulated sum of a thousand pounds and upwards, upon each side, came to be staked on the issue of the game.—So large a risk included all those fortunes which Mowbray commanded by his sister’s kindness, and nearly all his previous winnings, so to him the alternative was victory or ruin. He could not hide his agitation, however desirous to do so. He drank wine to supply himself with courage—he drank water to cool his agitation; and at length bent himself to play with as much care and attention as he felt himself enabled to command.

In the first part of the game their luck appeared tolerably equal, and the play of both befitting gamesters who had dared to place a sum on the cast. But, as it drew towards a conclusion, fortune altogether deserted him who stood most in need of her favour, Mowbray, with silent despair, saw his fate depend on a single trial, and that with every odds against him, for Lord Etherington was the elder hand. But how can fortune’s favour secure any one who is not true to himself?—By an infraction of the laws of the game, which could only have been expected from the veriest bungler that e

ouched a card, Lord Etherington called a point without showing it, and, by the ordinary rule, Mowbray was entitled to count his own—and in the course of that and the next hand, gained the game and kept the stakes. Lord Etherington showed chagrin and displeasure, and seemed to think that the rigour of the game had been more insisted upon than in courtesy it ought to have been, when men were playing for so small a stake. Mowbray did not understand this logic. A thousand pounds, he said, were in his eyes no nut-shells; the rules of piquet were insisted on by all but boys and women; and for his part, he had rather not play at all than not play the game.

"So it would seem, my dear Mowbray," said the Earl; "for on my soul, I never saw so disconsolate a visage as thine during that unlucky game—it withdrew all my attention from my hand; and I may safely say, your rueful countenance has stood me in a thousand pounds. If I could transfer thy long visage to canvass, I should have both my revenge and my money; for a correct resemblance would be worth not a penny less than the original has cost me."

"You are welcome to your jest, my lord," said Mowbray, "it has been well paid for; and I will serve you in ten thousand at the same rate. What say you?" he proceeded, taking up and shuffling the cards, "will you do yourself more justice in another game?—Revenge, they say, is sweet."

"I have no appetite for it this evening," said the Earl, gravely; "if I had, Mowbray, you might come by the worse. I do not *always* call a point without showing it."

"Your lordship is out of humour with yourself for a blunder that might happen to any man—it was as much my good luck as a good and would have been, and so Fortune be praised."

"But what if with this Fortune had nought to do?" replied Lord Etherington. "What if, sitting down with an honest fellow and a friend like yourself, Mowbray, a man should rather choose to lose his own money, which he could afford, than to win what it might distress his friend to part with?"

"Supposing a case so far out of supposition, my lord," answered Mowbray, who felt the question ticklish—"for, with submission, the allegation is easily made, and is totally incapable of proof—I should say, no one had a right to think for me in such a particular, or to suppose that I played for a higher stake than was convenient."

"And thus your friend, poor devil," replied Lord Etherington, "would lose his money, and run the risk of a quarrel into the boot!—We will try it another way—Suppose this good-humoured and simple-minded gamester had a favour of the deepest import to ask of his friend, and judged it better to prefer his request to a winner than to a loser?"

"If this applies to me, my lord," replied Mowbray, "it is necessary I should learn how I can oblige your lordship."

"That is a word soon spoken, but so difficult to be recalled, that I am almost tempted to pause—but yet it must be said.—Mowbray, you have a sister."

Mowbray started.—"I have indeed a sister, my lord; but I can conceive no case in which her name can enter with propriety into our present discussion."

"Again in the menacing mood!" said Lord Etherington, in his former tone; "now here is a pretty fellow—he would first cut my throat for having won a thousand pounds from me, and then for offering to make his sister a countess!"

"A countess, my lord?" said Mowbray; "you are but jesting—you have never even seen Clara Mowbray."

"Perhaps not—but what then?—I may have seen her picture, as Puff says in the Critic, or fallen in love with her from rumour—or to save farther supposition, as I see they render you impatient, I may be satisfied with knowing that she is a beautiful and accomplished young lady, with a large fortune."

"What fortune do you mean, my lord?" said Mowbray, recollecting with alarm some claims, which, according to Meiklewham's view of the subject, his sister might form upon his property.—"What estate?—there is nothing belongs to our family save these lands of St Ronan's, or what is left of them; and of these I am, my lord, an undoubted heir of entail in possession."

"Be it so," said the Earl, "for I have no claim on your mountain realms here, which are, doubtless,

——— 'renown'd of old
For knights, and squires, and barons bold ;'

my views respect a much richer, though less romantic domain—large manor, high Nettlewood. House, old, but standing in the midst of such glorious oaks—three thousand acres of lands, arable pasture, and woodland, exclusive of the two closes, occupied by Widow Hodge and Goodman Trampelod—manorial rights—mines and minerals—and the devil knows how many good things beside, all lying in the vale of Bever."

"And what has my sister to do with all this?" asked Mowbray, in great surprise.

"Nothing; but that it belongs to her when she becomes Countess of Etherington."

"It is, then, your lordship's property already?"

"No, by Jove! nor can it, unless your sister honours me with her approbation of my suit," replied the Earl.

"This is a sorer puzzle than one of Lady Penelope's charades, my lord," said Mr Mowbray; "I must call in the assistance of the Reverend Mr Chatterly."

"You shall not need," said Lord Etherington; "I will give you the key, but listen to me with patience.—You know that we nobles of England, less jealous of our sixteen quarters than those on the Continent, do not take scorn to line our decayed ermines with a little cloth of gold from the city; and my grandfather was lucky enough to get a wealthy wife, with a halting pedigree,—rather a singular circumstance, considering that her father was a countryman of yours. She had a brother, however, still more wealthy than herself, and who increased his fortune by continuing to carry on the trade which had first enriched his family. At length he summed up his books, washed his hands of commerce, and retired to Nettlewood, to become a gentleman; and here my much respected grand-uncle was seized with

age of making himself a man of consequence. He tried what a woman of family would do; but he soon found that what advantage his family might derive from his doing so, his own position was but little illustrated. He next resolved to become a man of family himself. His father had left Scotland when very young, and bore, I blush to say, the vulgar name of Scrogie. This name, a dissyllable my uncle carried in person to the herald office in London; but neither Lyon, nor Marchmont, nor Islay, nor Snadoun, nor herald nor pursuivant, would patronise Scrogie.—Scrogie!—nothing could be made out of it—so that my worthy relative recourse to the surer side of the house, and began to found his position on his mother's name of Mowbray. In this he was much successful, and I believe some sly fellow stole for him a slip of your own family tree, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, which, I say, you have never missed. At any rate, for his *argent* and *or*, not a handsome piece of parchment, blazoned with a white lion Mowbray, to be borne quarterly, with three stunted or scrogies for Scrogie, and became thenceforth Mr Scrogie Mowbray, rather, as he subscribed himself, Reginald (his former Christian name was Ronald) S. Mowbray. He had a son who most undutifully sneered at all this, refused the honours of the high name of Mowbray, and insisted on retaining his father's original appellative of Scrogie, to the great annoyance of his said father's ears, and damage to his temper."

"Why, faith, betwixt the two," said Mowbray, "I own I should have preferred my own name, and I think the old gentleman's taste was better than the young one's."

"True; but both wilful, absurd originals, with a happy obstinacy and temper, whether derived from Mowbray or Scrogie I know not, which led them so often into opposition, that the offended father, Reginald S. Mowbray, turned his recusant son, Scrogie, fairly out of the house; and the fellow would have paid for his plebeian spirit with a whipping, had he not found refuge with a surviving partner of the name of Scrogie of all, who still carried on the lucrative branch of business by which the family had been first enriched. I mention these particulars to account, in so far as I can, for the singular predilection in which I now find myself placed."

"Proceed, my lord," said Mr Mowbray; "there is no denying the plainness of your story, and I presume you are quite serious in giving me such an extraordinary detail."

"Entirely so, upon my honour—and a most serious matter it is, you will presently find. When my worthy uncle, Mr S. Mowbray (he will not call him Scrogie, even in the grave), paid his debts to the world, every body concluded he would be found to have disinherited his son, the unfilial Scrogie, and so far everybody was right; but it was also generally believed that he would settle the estate on my nephew, Lord Etherington, the son of his sister, and therein every one was wrong. For my excellent grand-uncle had pondered with himself that the favoured name of Mowbray would take no advantage, and obtain no additional elevation, if his estate of Nettlewood (otherwise called Mowbray Park) should descend to our family without any

condition; and with the assistance of a sharp attorney, he settled on me, then a schoolboy, *on condition* that I should, before attain the age of twenty-five complete, take unto myself in holy wedlock young lady of good fame, of the name of Mowbray, and, by presence, of the house of St Ronan's, should a damsel of that house ex—Now my riddle is read."

"And a very extraordinary one it is," replied Mowbray, thoughtfully.

"Confess the truth," said Lord Etherington, laying his hand on shoulder; "you think the story will bear a grain of a scruple of doubt if not a whole scruple itself?"

"At least, my lord," answered Mowbray, "your lordship will allow that, being Miss Mowbray's only near relation, and sole guardian, may, without offence, pause upon a suit for her hand, made under such odd circumstances."

"If you have the least doubt either respecting my rank or fortune I can give, of course, the most satisfactory references," said the Earl of Etherington.

"That I can easily believe, my lord," said Mowbray; nor do I the least fear deception, where detection would be so easy. Your lordship's proceedings towards me, too" (with a conscious glance at the bills he still held in his hand), "have, I admit, been such as to intimate some such deep cause of interest as you have been pleased to state. But it seems strange that your lordship should have permitted years to glide away, without so much as inquiring after the young lady, who, I believe, is the only person qualified, as your grand-uncle's will requires, with whom you can form an alliance. It appears to me, that long before now, this matter ought to have been investigated; and that, even now, it would have been more natural and more decorous to have at least seen my sister before posing for her hand."

"On the first point, my dear Mowbray," said Lord Etherington, "I am free to own to you that, without meaning your sister the least affront, I would have got rid of this clause if I could; for every man would fain choose a wife for himself, and I feel no hurry to marry at all. But the rogue-lawyers, after taking fees, and keeping me in hand for years, have at length roundly told me the clause must be complied with, or Nettlewood must have another master. I thought it best to come down here in person in order to address the fair lady; but as accident has hitherto prevented my seeing her, as I found in her brother a man who understands the world, I thought you will not think the worse of me that I have endeavoured in the outset to make you my friend. Truth is, I shall be twenty-five in the course of a month; and without your favour, and the opportunity which only you can afford me, that seems a short time to wait to win a lady of Miss Mowbray's merit."

"And what is the alternative if you do not form this proposed alliance, my lord?" said Mowbray.

"The bequest of my grand-uncle lapses," said the Earl, "and Nettlewood, with its old house, and older oaks, manorial rights, Harp Trampclod, and all, devolves on a certain cousin-german of mine, whom Heaven of his mercy confound!"

You have left yourself little time to prevent such an event, my lord," said Mowbray; "but things being as I now see them, you shall have what interest I can give you in the affair.—We must stand, however, on more equal terms, my lord.—I will condescend so far as to allow it would have been inconvenient for me at this moment to have lost that game, but I cannot in the circumstances think of acting as if I had fairly won it. We must draw stakes, my lord."

Not a word of that, if you really mean me kindly, my dear Mowbray. The blunder was a real one, for I was indeed thinking, as you suppose, on other things than the showing my point.—All was lost and won.—I hope I shall have opportunities of offering my services, which may perhaps give me some right to your partiality—at present we are on equal footing on all sides—perhaps so."

If your lordship thinks so," said Mowbray,—and then passing lightly to what he felt he could say with more confidence,—“Indeed, my lord, my rate, no personal obligation to myself could prevent my doing my full duty as guardian to my sister.”

Unquestionably, I desire nothing else," replied the Earl of Etherington.

I must therefore understand that your lordship is quite serious in your proposal; and that it is not to be withdrawn, even if upon acquaintance with Miss Mowbray, you should not perhaps think her deserving of your lordship's attentions as report may have spoken

Mr Mowbray," replied the Earl, "the treaty between you and me must be as definite as if I were a sovereign prince, demanding in marriage the sister of a neighbouring monarch, whom, according to the etiquette, he neither has seen nor could see. I have been quite frank with you, and I have stated to you that my present motives for entering upon negotiation are not personal, but territorial; when I view Miss Mowbray, I have no doubt they will be otherwise. I have said she is beautiful."

Something of the palest, my lord," answered Mowbray.

A fine complexion is the first attraction which is lost in the world of fashion, and that which it is easiest to replace."

Dispositions, my lord, may differ," said Mowbray, "without faults on either side. I presume your lordship has inquired into my sister's. She is amiable, accomplished, sensible, and high-spirited; yet——"

I understand you, Mr Mowbray, and will spare you the pain of speaking out. I have heard Miss Mowbray is in some respects—peculiar; to use a broader word—a little whimsical. No matter. I will have the less to learn when she becomes a countess, and a woman of fashion."

Are you serious, my lord?" said Mowbray.

I am—and I will speak my mind still more plainly. I have a good temper, and excellent spirits, and can endure a good deal of peculiarity in those I live with. I have no doubt your sister and I will live happily together—But in case it should prove otherwise, arrangements may be made previously, which will enable us in certain

circumstances to live happily apart. My own estate is large Nettlewood will bear dividing."

"Nay, then," said Mowbray, "I have little more to say—not indeed remains for inquiry, so far as your lordship is concerned. But my sister must have free liberty of choice—so far as I am concerned, your lordship's suit has my interest."

"And I trust we may consider it as a done thing?"

"With Clara's approbation—certainly," answered Mowbray.

"I trust there is no chance of personal repugnance on the young lady's part?" said the young peer.

"I anticipate nothing of the kind, my lord," answered Mowbray, "as I presume there is no reason for any; but young ladies were capricious, and if Clara, after I have done and said all that a brother ought to do, should remain repugnant, there is a point in the termination of my influence which it would be cruelty to pass."

The Earl of Etherington walked a turn through the apartment, then paused, and said, in a grave and doubtful tone, "In the meanwhile, I am bound, and the young lady is free, Mowbray. Is it quite fair?"

"It is what happens in every case, my lord, where a gentleman proposes for a lady," answered Mowbray; "he must remain in the course, bound by his offer, until, within a reasonable time, it is accepted or rejected. It is not my fault that your lordship has decided your wishes to me, before ascertaining Clara's inclination. But as yet the matter is between ourselves—I make you welcome to back if you think proper. Clara Mowbray needs not push for a match."

"Nor do I desire," said the young nobleman, "any time to reconsider the resolution which I have confided to you. I am not in the least fearful that I shall change my mind on seeing your sister. I am ready to stand by the proposal which I have made to you; however, you feel so extremely delicately on my account," he continued, "I can see and even converse with Miss Mowbray at this time of yours, without the necessity of being at all presented to her—character which I have assumed in a manner obliges me to wear a mask."

"Certainly," said the Laird of St Ronan's, "and I am glad for both our sakes, your lordship thinks of taking a little law upon occasion."

"I shall profit nothing by it," said the Earl; "my doom is sealed before I start—but if this mode of managing the matter will satisfy your conscience, I have no objection to it—it cannot consume much time, which is what I have to look to."

They then shook hands and parted, without any farther discussion which could interest the reader.

Mowbray was glad to find himself alone, in order to think over what had happened, and to ascertain the state of his own mind, which at present was puzzling even to himself. He could not feel that much greater advantages of every kind might accrue to himself and his family from the alliance of the wealthy young lady than could have been derived from any share of his spoils which

proposed to gain by superior address in play, or greater skill on turf. But his pride was hurt when he recollected that he had sold himself entirely in Lord Etherington's power; and the escape from absolute ruin which he had made, solely by the sufferance of his benefactor, had nothing in it consolatory to his wounded feelings. He lowered in his own eyes, when he recollected how completely the poor victim of his ingenuity had seen through his schemes, and abstained from baffling them entirely, because to do so suited with his own. There was a shade of suspicion, too, which he could not entirely eradicate from his mind.—What occasion had this great nobleman to preface, by the voluntary loss of a brace of thousands, a proposal which must have been acceptable in itself, without such sacrifice? And why should he, after all, have been so eager to secure his accession to the proposed alliance, before he had ever seen the lady who was the object of it? However hurried for time, he might have waited the event at least of the entertainment at Shaws-Castle, at which Clara was necessarily obliged to make her appearance.—Yet such conduct, however unusual, was equally inconsistent with any sinister intentions; since the sacrifice of a large sum of money, and the declaration of his views upon a portionless young noble of family, could scarcely be the preface to any unfair practice. That, upon the whole, Mowbray settled, that what was uncommon in the Earl's conduct arose from the hasty and eager disposition of a young Englishman, to whom money is of little consequence, and who is too headlong in pursuit of the favourite plan of the moment, to proceed in the most rational or most ordinary manner. If, however, there should prove anything farther in the matter than he had at present discovered, Mowbray promised himself that the utmost inspection on his part could not fail to discover it, and that in time to prevent any ill consequences to his sister or himself. Immersed in such cogitations, he avoided the inquisitive presence of Mr Meiklewham, who, as usual, had been watching for him to learn what matters were going on; and although it was now late, he mounted his horse, and rode hastily to Shaws-Castle. On the way he deliberated with himself whether to mention to his sister the application which had been made to him, in order to prepare her to receive the young Earl as a suitor, favoured with her brother's approbation. "But no, no, no;" such was the result of his contemplation. He might take it into her head that his thoughts were bent less on having her for a Countess, than on obtaining possession of his father's estate. "We must keep quiet," concluded he, until her personal appearance and accomplishments may appear at least to exert some influence upon his choice. "We must say nothing till this evening entertainment has been given and received."

CHAPTER XIX.

A LETTER.

"Has he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath?—Well—Be it so."

Richard III.

MOWBRAY had no sooner left the Earl's apartment than the la commenced an epistle to a friend and associate, which we lay be the reader, as best calculated to illustrate the views and motive the writer. It was addressed to Captain Jekyl, of the — regim of Guards, at the Green Dragon, Harrowgate, and was of the fol ing tenor:—

"DEAR HARRY,

"I have expected you here these ten days past, anxiously as a man was looked for; and have now to charge your absence as treason to your sworn allegiance. Surely you do not presume, one of Napoleon's new-made monarchs, to grumble for independence as if your greatness were of your own making, or as if I had picked you out of the whole of St James's coffee-house to hold my back for your sake, forsooth, not for my own? Wherefore, lay aside your own proper business, be it the pursuit of dowagers, or plucking of pigeons, and instantly repair to this place, where I most speedily want your assistance.—*May* want it, said I? Why, no, negligent of friends and allies, I *have* wanted it already, and when it might have done me yeoman's service. Know that I had an affair since I came hither—have got hurt myself, and have nearly shot my friend; and if I had I might have been hanged for want of Harry Jekyl to bear witness in my favour. I was so on my road to this place, when, not choosing, for certain reasons to pass through the old village, I struck by a footpath into the wood which separate it from the new Spaw, leaving my carriage and people to go the carriage-way. I had not walked half a mile when I beheld the footsteps of some one behind, and, looking round, what should I behold but the face in the world which I most cordially hate and abhor—I mean that which stands on the shoulders of my right trust and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, Saint Francis. He seemed as much confounded as I was at our unexpected meeting; and in a minute ere he found breath to demand what I did in Scotland, contrary to my promise, as he was pleased to express it. I retaliated and charged him with being here, in contradiction to his. He justified, and said he had only come down upon the express information that I was upon my road to St Ronan's. Now, Harry, how the devil should he have known this hadst thou been quite faithful? for I am sure to no ear but thine own did I breathe a whisper of my purpose.—Next, with the insolent assumption of superiority, which he founded on what he calls the rectitude of his purpose, he proposed we should

withdraw from a neighbourhood into which we could bring but wretchedness.—I have told you how difficult it is to cope the calm and resolute manner that the devil gifts him with on occasions; but I was determined he should not carry the day time. I saw no chance for it, however, but to put myself into a ringing passion, which, thank Heaven, I can always do on short notice. I charged him with having imposed formerly on my youth, made himself judge of my rights; and I accompanied my defiance with the strongest terms of irony and contempt, as well as with words of instant satisfaction. I had my travelling pistols with me (for my *own cause*), and, to my surprise, my gentleman was equally provoked. For fair play's sake, I made him take one of my pistols—my *Kuchenritters*—a brace of balls in each, but that circumstance I forgot. I would fain have argued the matter a little longer; but I was right at the time, and think still, that the best arguments which I can exchange, must come from the point of the sword, or the muzzle of the pistol.—We fired nearly together, and I think both of us were wounded—I am sure I did, but recovered in a minute, with a damaged ear and a scratch on the temple—it was the last which stunned me—much for double-loaded pistols. My friend was invisible, and I had nothing for it but to walk to the Spaw, bleeding all the way like a madman, and tell a raw-head-and-bloody bone story about a footpad, but for my earldom, and my gory locks, no living soul would believe it.

Shortly after, when I had been installed in a sick room, I had mortification to learn, that my own impatience had brought all this mischief upon me, at a moment when I had every chance of getting rid of my friend without trouble, had I but let him go on his errand; for it seems he had an appointment that morning with my old friend, Lord Byron, who is said to be a bullet-slitter, and would perhaps have rid me of Saint Francis without any trouble or risk on my part. His non-appearance at this rendezvous has placed Master Francis Tyrrel, as he chooses to call himself, in the worst odour possible with the gentry at the Spring, who have denounced him as a coward and no gentleman.—What to think of the business myself I know not; and I much want your assistance to see what can have come of this fellow, who, like a spectre of ill omen, has so often started and baffled my best plans. My own confinement renders me inactive, though my wound is fast healing. Dead he cannot be; had he been mortally wounded, we should have heard of him somewhere or other—he could not have vanished from the earth like a bubble of the elements. Well and sound he cannot be; for, besides, I am sure I saw him stagger and drop, firing his pistol as he fell, and I know him well enough to swear, that had he not been severely wounded, he would have first pestered me with his accursed presence for assistance, and then walked forward with his usual composure to settle the matter with Sir Bingo Binks. No—no—Saint Francis is none of those who leave such jobs half finished—it is but doing him justice to say, he has the devil's courage to back his own deliberate imperfection. But then, if wounded severely, he must be still in this neighbourhood, and probably in concealment—this is what I must discover,

and I want your assistance in my inquiries among the natives.—Hither, Harry, as ever you look for good at my hand.

“A good player, Harry, always studies to make the best of cards—and so I have endeavoured to turn my wound to so account; and it has given me the opportunity to secure Monsieur Frere in my interests. You may say very truly, that it is of consequence to me to know the character of this new actor or the considered scene of my adventures.—Know, then, he is that most ingenuous of all monsters—a Scotch Buck—how far from being best of the season you may easily judge. Every point of national character is opposed to the pretensions of this luckless race, when they attempt to take on them a personage which is assumed with much facility by their brethren of the Isle of Saints. They are shrewd people, indeed, but so destitute of ease, grace, pliability, manners, and insinuation of address, that they eternally seem to suffer actual misery in their attempts to look gay and careless. Their pride heads them back at one turn, their poverty at another, their pedantry at a third, their *mauvaise honte* at a fourth; and with so many obstacles to make them bolt off the course, it is positively impossible they should win the plate. No, Harry, it is the gentlemen in Old England who have to fear a Caledonian invasion—they will make no conquests in the world of fashion. Excellent bank the Scots may be, for they are eternally calculating how to add interest to principal;—good soldiers, for they are if not such heroes as they would be thought, as brave, I suppose, as their neighbours and much more amenable to discipline;—lawyers they are too, indeed every country gentleman is bred one, and their patient and crafty disposition enables them, in other lines, to submit to hardships which other natives could not bear, and avail themselves of advantages which others would let pass under their noses unavailingly. But assuredly Heaven did not form the Caledonian for the gay world; and his efforts at ease, grace, and gaiety, resemble only the clumsy gambols of the ass in the fable. Yet the Scot has his sphere too (in his own country only), where the character which he assumes is allowed to pass current. This Mowbray, now—my brother-in-law of mine,—might do pretty well at a Northern Meeting, or the Leith races, where he could give five minutes to the sports of the day, and the next half hour to country politics, or to farming; but it is scarce necessary to tell you, Harry, that this half-fellow will not pass on the better side of the Tweed.

“Yet, for all I have told you, this trout was not easily tickled; I should I have made much of him, had he not, in the plenitude of his northern conceit, entertained that notion of my being a good subject of plunder, which you had contrived (blessing on your contrivance brain!) to insinuate into him by means of Wolverine. He commenced this hopeful experiment, and as you must have anticipated he would catch a Tartar with a vengeance. Of course, I used my victory only so far as to secure his interest in accomplishing my principal object; and yet I could see my gentleman's pride was so much injured in the course of the negotiation, that not all the advantages which the match offered to his damned family were able entirely to sub-

chagrin arising from his defeat. He did gulp it down, though, and we are friends and allies for the present at least—not so cordially so, however, as to induce me to trust him with the whole of the awfully complicated tale. The circumstance of the will it was necessary to communicate, as affording a sufficiently strong reason for urging my suit; and this partial disclosure enabled me for the present to dispense with farther confidence.

You will observe that I stand by no means secure; and besides the chance of my cousin's reappearance—a certain event, unless he is worse than I dare hope for—I have perhaps to expect the fantastic indignance of Clara herself, or some sulky freak on her brother's part.—In a word—and let it be such a one as conjurers raise the devil with—Harry Jekyl, *I want you*.

As well knowing the nature of my friend, I can assure you that my own interest, as well as mine, may be advanced by his coming here on duty. Here is a blockhead whom I already mentioned, Bingo Binks, with whom something may be done worth *your* while, though scarce worth *mine*. The Baronet is a perfect buzzard, when I came here he was under Mowbray's training. But the forward Scot had plucked half-a-dozen penfeathers from his wing with so little precaution, that the Baronet has become frightened and shy, and is now in the act of rebelling against Mowbray, whom he both hates and fears—the least backing from a knowing hand like that, and the bird becomes your own, feathers and all.—Moreover,

‘ ———by my life,
This Bingo hath a mighty pretty wife.’

My lovely woman, Harry—rather plump, and above the middle size—according to your taste—A Juno in beauty, looking with such scorn on her husband, whom she despises and hates, and seeming, as if she *could* not so differently on any one whom she might like better, that, on my faith, 'twere sin not to give her occasion. If you please to venture your luck, either with the knight or the lady, you shall have fair play, and no interference—that is, provided you appear upon this summons; otherwise, I may be so placed, that the affairs of the knight and the lady may fall under my own immediate cognisance. And so, Harry, if you wish to profit by these hints, you had best make haste, as well to your own concerns, as to assist me in mine.—Yours, Harry, as I behave myself,

“ETHERINGTON.”

Having finished this eloquent and instructive epistle, the young lord demanded the attendance of his own valet, Solmes, whom he ordered to put it into the post-office without delay, and with his own hand.

CHAPTER XX.

THEATRICALS.

——The play's the thing.

Hamlet.

THE important day had now arrived, the arrangement for which had for some time occupied all the conversation and thoughts of the good company at the Well of St Ronan's. To give it, at the same time, a degree of novelty and consequence, Lady Penelope Feather had long since suggested to Mr Mowbray that the more gifted and accomplished part of the guests might contribute to furnish out entertainment for the rest, by acting a few scenes of some popular drama; an accomplishment in which her self-conceit assured her that she was peculiarly qualified to excel. Mr Mowbray, who seemed on this occasion to have thrown the reins entirely into Ladyship's hands, made no objection to the plan which she proposed, excepting that the old-fashioned hedges and walks of the garden at Shaws-Castle must necessarily serve for stage and scenery, as there was no time to fit up the old hall for the exhibition of the proposed theatricals.¹ But upon inquiry among the company, this plan was wrecked upon the ordinary shelves, to wit, the difficulty of finding performers who would consent to assume the lower characters of drama. For the first parts there were candidates more than enough, but most of these were greatly too high-spirited to play the fool, except they were permitted to top the part. Then amongst the few unambitious underlings, who could be coaxed or cajoled to undertake subordinate characters, there were so many bad memories, and shabby memories, and treacherous memories, that at length the plan was resigned in despair.

A substitute proposed by Lady Penelope was next considered. It was proposed to act what the Italians call a Comedy of Characters, that is, not an exact drama, in which the actors deliver what is laid down for them by the author; but one, in which the plot having been previously fixed upon, and a few striking scenes adjusted, the actors are expected to supply the dialogue extempore, or, as Petruchio says, from their mother wit. This is an amusement which affords much entertainment in Italy, particularly in the state of Venice, where the characters of their drama have been long since all previously fixed, and are handed down by tradition; and this species of drama, though rather belonging to the mask than to the

¹ At Kilruddery, the noble seat of Lord Meath, in the county of Wicklow, there is a situation for private theatrical exhibitions in the open air, planted out with many evergreens which arise there in the most luxuriant magnificence. It has a wild and romantic effect, reminding one of the scene in which Bottom rehearsed his pageant with a green plot for a stage, and a hawthorn brake for a tiring-room.

re, is distinguished by the name of *Commedia dell' Arte*.¹ But name-faced character of Britons is still more alien from a species play, where there is a constant and extemporaneous demand it, or the sort of ready small-talk which supplies its place, than the regular exhibitions of the drama, where the author, stand-responsible for language and sentiment, leaves to the personators the scenes only the trouble of finding enunciation and action.

At the ardent and active spirit of Lady Penelope, still athirst after it, though baffled in her two first projects, brought forward a plan in which she was more successful. This was the proposal to invite a certain number, at least, of the guests, properly dressed for the occasion, as representing some well-known historical or dramatic characters, in a group, having reference to history, or to a scene of the drama. In this representation, which may be called play-picture, action, even pantomimical action, was not expected; all that was required of the performers was to throw themselves into such a group as might express a marked and striking point of an event-remembered scene, but where the actors are at a pause, and without either speech or motion. In this species of representation there was no tax, either on the invention or memory of those who might undertake parts; and, what recommended it still farther to the good lady, there was no marked difference betwixt the hero and heroine of the group, and the less distinguished characters by whom they were attended on the stage; and every one who had confidence in her handsome shape and a becoming dress, might hope, though standing in not quite so broad and favourable a light as the principal characters, to draw, nevertheless, a considerable portion of attention and applause. This motion, therefore, that the company, or such of it as might choose to appear properly dressed for the occasion, should form themselves into one or more groups, which might be changed and varied as often as they pleased, was hailed and accepted as a bright idea, which assigned to every one a share of the importance attached to its probable success.

Rowbray, on his side, promised to contrive some arrangement which should separate the actors in this mute drama from the spectators, and enable the former to vary the amusement, by withdrawing themselves from the scene, and again appearing upon it under a different and new combination. This plan of exhibition, where the clothes and affected attitudes supplied all draughts upon fancy, was highly agreeable to most of the ladies present; and Lady Binks, whose discontent seemed proof against every suggestion that could be proposed to soothe it, acquiesced in the project, with perfect indifference indeed, but with something less of sullenness than usual.

There now only remained to rummage the circulating library for a piece of sufficient celebrity to command attention, and which should be at the same time suited to the execution of their project.

¹ See Mr William Stewart Rose's very interesting Letters from the North of Italy, Letter xxx., where this curious subject is treated with the information and on which distinguish that accomplished author.

Bell's British Theatre, Miller's Modern and Ancient Drama about twenty old volumes, in which stray tragedies and com were associated, like the passengers in a mail-coach, without least attempt at selection or arrangement, were all examined in course of their researches. But Lady Penelope declared loftily, decidedly for Shakespeare, as the author whose immortal works were fresh in every one's recollection. Shakespeare was then chosen, and from his works the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was selected, as the play which afforded the greatest variety of characters, and most scope of course for the intended representation. An active competition presently occurred among the greater part of the company, for such copies of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* as the volume of Shakespeare containing it, as could be got in the neighbourhood; for, notwithstanding Lady Penelope's declaration that every one who could read had Shakespeare's plays by heart, it appeared that such of his dramas as have not kept possession of the stage were very little known at St Ronan's, save among those people who are emphatically called readers.

The adjustment of the parts was the first subject of consideration, so soon as those who intended to assume characters had refreshed their recollection on the subject of the piece. Theseus was unanimously assigned to Mowbray, the giver of the entertainment, and therefore justly entitled to represent the Duke of Athens. He wore a costume of an Amazonian crest and plume, a tucked-up vest, a tight buskin of sky-blue silk, buckled with diamonds, recommending Lady Binks to the part of Hippolyta. The superior stature of Mowbray to Lady Penelope made it necessary that the former should perform the part of Helena, and her ladyship rested content with the shrewish character of Hermia. It was resolved to commend the young Earl of Etherington with the part of Lysander, which, however, his Lordship declined, and, preferring comedy to tragedy, refused to appear in any other character than that of the magnanimous Bottom; and he gave them such a humorous performance of his quality in that part, that all were delighted at once with his condescension in assuming, and his skill in performing, the part of Pyramus.

The part of Egeus was voted to Captain MacTurk, whose nancy in refusing to appear in any other than the full Highland dress had nearly disconcerted the whole affair. At length this objection was got over on the authority of Childe Harold, who remarked the similarity betwixt the Highland and Grecian costume;¹ and the company, dispensing with the difference of colour, voted the Captain's variegated kilt, of the MacTurk tartan, to be the kirtle of the Grecian mountaineer,—Egeus to be an Arnout, and the Captain to be Egeus. Chatterly and the painter, walking gentlemen by profession, agreed to walk through the parts of Demetrius and Lysander, the two Athenian lovers; and Mr Winterblossom, loath to be lazy, after many excuses, was bribed, by Lady Penelope with an antique, or supposed antique cameo, to play the part of Philost

¹ See Note E. *The Arnauts.*

er of the revels, provided his gout would permit him to remain upon the turf, which was to be their stage. Islin trousers, adorned with spangles, a voluminous turban of gauze, and wings of the same, together with an embroidered er, converted at once Miss Digges into Oberon, the King of fows, whose sovereign gravity, however, was somewhat indistinctly represented by the silly gaiety of Miss in her Teens, and uncontrolled delight which she felt in her fine clothes. A ger sister represented Titania; and two or three subordinate were selected among families attending the salutiferous fountains who were easily persuaded to let their children figure in fine es at so juvenile an age, though they shook their head at Miss es and her pantaloons, and no less at the liberal display of Binks's right leg, with which the Amazonian garb gratified the public of St Ronan's.

Quackleben was applied to to play Wall, by the assistance of a wooden horse, or screen, as clothes are usually dried upon; old Attorney stood for Lyon; and the other characters of Bot's drama were easily found among the unnamed frequenters of Spring. Dressed rehearsals, and so forth, went merrily on—all there was a play fitted.

Even the Doctor's eloquence could not press Mrs Blower the scheme, although she was particularly wanted to represent

be. "Truth is," she replied, "I dinna greatly like stage-plays. John Blower, honest man, as sailors are aye for some spree or another take me ance to see ane Mrs Siddons—I thought we should been crushed to death before we gat in—a' my things riven aff back, forby the four lily-white shillings that it cost us—and then me three frightsome carlines wi' besoms, and they wad bewitch Blower's wife—I was lang enough there—and out I wad be, and John Blower gat me, but wi' nae sma' fight and fend.—My Penelope Penfitter, and the great folk, may just take it as like; but in my mind, Dr Cacklehen, it's a mere blasphemy for to gar themselves look otherwise than their Maker made them; when the changing the name which was given them at baptism, think, an awful falling away from our vows; and though by, which I take to be Greek for Tibbie, may be a very good e, yet Margaret was I christened, and Margaret will I die."

"You mistake the matter entirely, my dear Mrs Blower," said the Doctor; "there's nothing serious intended—a mere *placebo*—just a tisement to cheer the spirits, and assist the effect of the waters. Cheerfulness is a great promoter of health."

"Dinna tell me o' health, Dr Kittlepin!—Can it be for the puir M'Durk's health to major about in the tartans like a tobacco-sign in a frosty morning, wi' his poor wizened houghs as blue blawart?—weel I wot he is a humbling spectacle. Or can it be for any body health or pleasure either to see your ainsell, Doctor, standing about wi' a claise screen tied to your back, covered wi' r, and painted like a stane and lime wa'?—I'll gang to see nane o' your eir vanities, Dr Kittlehen; and if there is nae other decent body

to take care o' me, as I dinna like to sit a haill afternoon by mys-
I'll e'en gae down to Mr Sowerbrowst the maltster's—he is a pleas-
sensible man, and a sponsible man in the world, and his sister
very decent woman."

"Confound Sowerbrowst," thought the Doctor; "if I had gues-
he was to come across me thus, he should not have got the better
his dyspepsy so early.—My dear Mrs Blower," he continued,
aloud, "it is a foolish affair enough, I must confess; but every
son of style and fashion at the Well has settled to attend
exhibition; there has been nothing else talked of for this mo-
through the whole country, and it will be a year before it is
gotten. And I would have you consider how ill it will look,
dear Mrs Blower, to stay away—nobody will believe you had a c-
—no, not though you were to hang it round your neck like a la-
round a phial of tincture, Mrs Blower."

"If ye thought *that*, Doctor Kickherben," said the widow, alarm-
at the idea of losing cast, "I wad e'en gang to the show, like ot-
folk; sinful and shameful if it be, let them that make the sin b-
the shame. But then I will put on nane of their Popish disgu-
—me that has lived in North Leith, baith wife and lass, for I shan-
say how mony years, and has a character to keep up baith with sa-
and sinner.—And then, wha's to take care of me, since you are g-
to make a lime-and-stane wa' of yoursell, Doctor Kickinben?"

"My dear Mrs Blower, if such is your determination, I will
make a wall of myself. Her ladyship must consider my profess-
—she must understand it is my function to look after my patien-
in preference to all the stage-plays in this world—and to attend o-
case like yours, Mrs Blower, it is my duty to sacrifice, were it cal-
for, the whole drama from Shakespeare to O'Keefe."

On hearing this magnanimous resolution, the widow's heart
greatly cheered; for, in fact, she might probably have considered
Doctor's perseverance in the plan, of which she had expressed su-
high disapprobation, as little less than a symptom of absolute def-
tion from his allegiance. By an accommodation, therefore, wh-
suited both parties, it was settled that the Doctor should attend
loving widow to Shaws-Castle, without mask or mantle; and that
painted screen should be transferred from Quackleben's back to
broad shoulders of a briefless barrister, well qualified for the par-
Wall, since the composition of his skull might have rivalled in so-
ity the mortar and stone of the most approved builder.

We must not pause to dilate upon the various labours of b-
and spirit which preceded the intervening space, betwixt the set-
ment of this gay scheme and the time appointed to carry it i-
execution. We will not attempt to describe how the wealthy,
letter and by commissioners, urged their researches through
stores of the Gallery of Fashion for specimens of Oriental finer
how they that were scant of diamonds supplied their place w-
paste and Bristol stones—how the country dealers were driven
of patience by the demand for goods of which they had never bef-
heard the name—and, lastly, how the busy fingers of the more eco-
mical damseis twisted handkerchiefs into turbans, and conver

coats into pantaloons, shaped and sewed, cut and clipped, and made many a decent gown and petticoat, to produce something like a Grecian habit. Who can describe the wonders wrought by active needles and scissors, aided by thimbles and thread, upon silver gauze, sprigged muslin? or who can show how if the fair nymphs of Spring did not entirely succeed in attaining the desired resemblance to heathen Greeks, they at least contrived to get rid of all allusion to sober Christians?

Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the various schemes of conveyance which were resorted to, in order to transfer the beau monde from the Spaw to the scene of revelry at Shaw's-Castle. These were as various as the fortunes and pretensions of the owners; from the costly curricle, with its outriders, to the humble taxed cart, nay, untaxed hack, which conveyed the personages of lesser rank. For the latter, indeed, the two post-chaises at the Inn seemed converted into hourly cabs, so often did they come and go between the Hotel and the Castle—a glad day for the postilions, and a day of martyrdom for the poor post horses; so seldom is it that every department of any society, however constituted, can be injured or benefited by the same concurrence.

Such, indeed, was the penury of vehicular conveyance, that applications were made in manner most humble, even to Meg Dods herself, creating she would permit her old whiskey to *ply* (for such might have been the phrase) at St Ronan's Well, for that day only, and that upon good cause shown. But not for sordid lucre would the daunted spirit of Meg compound her feud with her neighbours of the detested Well. "Her carriage," she briefly replied, "was engaged for her ain guest and the minister, and deil anither body's should gang intill't. Let every herring hing by its ain head." And, accordingly, at the duly appointed hour, creaked forth the stately conveyance, in which, carefully screened by the curtain from the gaze of the fry of the village, sat Nabob Touchwood, in the costume of an Indian merchant, or Shroff, as they are termed. The worthy man would not, perhaps, have been so punctual, had not a set of notes and messages from his friend at the Cleikum, ever following each other as thick as the papers which decorate the tail of a school-boy's kite, kept him so continually on the alert from daybreak till noon, that Mr Touchwood found him completely dressed; and the whiskey was only delayed for about ten minutes before the door of the manse, a space employed by Mr Cargill in searching for his spectacles, which at last were happily discovered upon his own nose. At length, seated by the side of his new friend, Mr Cargill arrived at Shaw's-Castle, the gate of which mansion was surrounded by a screaming group of children, so extravagantly delighted at seeing strange figures to whom each successive carriage gave birth, that the stern brow and well-known voice of Johnnie Tirlsneck, the rattle, though stationed in the court on express purpose, was not equal to the task of controlling them. These noisy intruders, however, who, it was believed, were somewhat favoured by Clara Mowbray, were excluded from the court which opened before the house, a couple of grooms or helpers armed with their whips, and could

only salute, with their shrill and wondering hailing, the various personages as they passed down a short avenue leading from the exterior gate.

The Cleikum nabob and the minister were greeted with shout not the least clamorous; which the former merited by the ease with which he wore the white turban, and the latter, by the infrequency of his appearance in public, and both, by the singular association of a decent clergyman of the Church of Scotland, in a dress more old-fashioned than could now be produced in the General Assembly, walking arm in arm, and seemingly in the most familiar terms, with a Parsee merchant. They stopped a moment at the gate of the courtyard to admire the front of the old mansion, which had been disturbed with so unusual a scene of gaiety.

Shaws-Castle, though so named, presented no appearance of defence; and the present edifice had never been designed for more than the accommodation of a peaceful family, having a low, heavy front, loaded with some of that meretricious ornament, which unites or rather confounding, the Gothic and Grecian architecture, was much used during the reigns of James VI. of Scotland, and his unfortunate son. The court formed a small square, two sides of which were occupied by such buildings as were required for the family, and the third by the stables, the only part to which much attention had been paid, the present Mr Mowbray having put them into excellent order. The fourth side of the square was shut up by a screen wall through which a door opened to the avenue; the whole being a kind of structure which may be still found on those old Scottish properties where a rage to render their place *Parkish*, as was at one time the prevailing phrase, has not induced the owners to pull down the venerable and sheltering appendages with which their wiser fathers had screened their mansion, and to lay the whole open to the keen north-east; much after the fashion of a spinster of fifty, who cherishes herself to gratify the public by an exposure of her thin red elbow and shrivelled neck and bosom.

A double door, thrown hospitably open on the present occasion, admitted the company into a dark and low hall, where Mowbray himself, wearing the under-dress of Theseus, but not having yet assumed his ducal cap and robes, stood to receive his guests with due courtesy, and to indicate to each the road allotted to him. Those who were to take a share in the representation of the morning, were conducted to an old saloon, destined for a green-room, and which communicated with a series of apartments on the right, hastily fitted with accommodations for arranging and completing their toilette, while others, who took no part in the intended drama, were ushered to the left, into a large, unfurnished, and long disused dining parlour, where a sashed door opened into the gardens, crossed with yew and holly hedges, still trimmed and clipped by the old grey-headed gardener, upon those principles which a Dutchman thought worthy commemorating in a didactic poem upon the *Ars Topiaria*.

A little wilderness, surrounding a beautiful piece of the smooth turf, and itself bounded by such high hedges as we have described, had been selected as the stage most proper for the exhibition of the

ended dramatic picture. It afforded many facilities; for a rising box exactly in front was accommodated with seats for the spectators, who had a complete view of the sylvan theatre, the bushes and trees having been cleared away, and the place supplied with a temporary screen, which, being withdrawn by the domestics appointed for that purpose, was to serve for the rising of the curtain. A red trellis, which passed through another part of the garden, terminated with a private door opening from the right wing of the building, seemed as if it had been planted on purpose for the proposed exhibition, as it served to give the personages of the drama convenient and secret access from the green-room to the place of presentation. Indeed, the dramatis personæ, at least those who directed the management of the matter, were induced, by so much convenience, to extend, in some measure, their original plan; and, instead of one group, as had been at first proposed, they now found themselves able to exhibit to the good company a succession of three or four, selected and arranged from different parts of the drama; giving some duration, as well as some variety, to the entertainment, besides the advantage of separating and contrasting the tragic and the comic scenes.

After wandering about amongst the gardens, which contained little to interest any one, and endeavouring to recognise some characters, who, accommodating themselves to the humours of the day, ventured to appear in the various disguises of ballad-singers, sailors, shepherds, Highlanders, and so forth, the company began to move together towards the spot where the seats prepared for them, the screen drawn in front of the bosky stage, induced them to assemble, and excited expectation, especially as a scroll in front of the esplanade set forth, in the words of the play, "This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house, and we will begin in action." A delay of about ten minutes began to excite some repressed murmurs of impatience among the audience, when the sound of Gow's fiddle suddenly burst from a neighbouring hedge, and which he had established his little orchestra. All were of a sudden silent,

"As through his dear strathspeys he bore with Highland rage."

When he changed his strain to an adagio, and suffered his music to die away in the plaintive notes of Roslin Castle, the echoes of the walls were, after a long slumber, awakened by that enthusiastic shout of applause, with which the Scots usually received and rewarded their country's gifted minstrel.

"He is his father's own son," said Touchwood to the clergyman, who both had gotten seats near about the centre of the place of performance. "It is many a long year since I listened to old Niel at the inn, and, to say truth, spent a night with him over pancakes and ale-brose; and I never expected to hear his match again in my lifetime. But stop—the curtain rises."

The screen was indeed withdrawn, and displayed Hermia, Helena, and their lovers, in attitudes corresponding to the scene of confusion occasioned by the error of Puck.

Messrs Chatterly and the Painter played their parts neither better nor worse than amateur actors in general; and the best that could be said of them was, that they seemed more than half ashamed of their exotic dresses, and of the public gaze.

But against this untimely weakness Lady Penelope was guarded by the strong shield of self-conceit. She minced, ambled, notwithstanding the slight appearance of her person, and the deductions which time had made on a countenance that had never been very much distinguished for beauty, seemed desirous to top the efforts of the beautiful daughter of *Ægeus*. The sullenness which was proper to the character of *Hermia* was much augmented by the discovery that *Miss Mowbray* was so much better dressed than herself—a discovery which she had but recently made, as that young lady had not attended on the regular rehearsals at the Well, but once, then without her stage habit. Her ladyship, however, did not permit this painful sense of inferiority, where she had expected triumph, far to prevail over her desire of shining, as to interrupt materially the manner in which she had settled to represent her portion of the scene. The nature of the exhibition precluded much action, and Lady Penelope made amends by such a succession of grimaces which might rival, in variety at least, the singular display which *Garrick* used to call “going his rounds.” She twisted her poor features into looks of most desperate love towards *Lysander*; into those of wounded and offended pride, when she turned them upon *Demetrius*; finally settled them on *Helena*, with the happiest possible imitation of an incensed rival, who feels the impossibility of relieving a swollen heart by tears alone, and is just about to have recourse to her nails.

No contrast could be stronger in looks, demeanour, and figure than that between *Hermia* and *Helena*. In the latter character the beautiful form and foreign dress of *Miss Mowbray* attracted all eyes. She kept her place on the stage, as a sentinel does that which his charge assigns him; for she had previously told her brother, though she consented, at his importunity, to make part of the exhibition, it was as a piece of the scene, not as an actor, and accordingly a painted figure could scarce be more immovable. The expression of her countenance seemed to be that of deep sorrow and perplexity belonging to her part, over which wandered at times an air of irony or ridicule, as if she were secretly scorning the whole exhibition, even herself for condescending to become part of it. Above this sense of bashfulness had cast upon her cheek a colour, which, though sufficiently slight, was more than her countenance was used to play; and when the spectators beheld, in the splendour and grandeur of a rich Oriental dress, her whom they had hitherto been accustomed to see attired only in the most careless manner, they felt the additional charms of surprise and contrast; so that the bursts of applause which were volleyed towards the stage, might be said to be addressed to her alone, and to vie in sincerity with those which have been forced from an audience by the most accomplished performer.

“Oh, that poor Lady Penelope!” said honest Mrs Blower, when her scruples against the exhibition were once got over, by

look upon it with particular interest,—“ I am really sorry for her face, for she gars it work like the sails of John Blower’s el in a stiff breeze. Oh, Doctor Cacklehen, dinna ye think she need, if it were possible, to rin ower her face wi’ a gusing iron, to take the wrinkles out o’t ? ”

“ Hush, hush ! my good dear Mrs Blower,” said the Doctor ; “ Lady Hope is a woman of quality, and my patient, and such people’s act charmingly—you must understand there is no hissing at private theatre—Hem ! ”

“ Ye may say what ye like, Doctor, but there is nae fule like an fule—To be sure, if she was as young and beautiful as Miss Gray—heg me, and I didna use to think her sae bonny neither dress—dress makes an unco difference. That shawl o’ hers—say the like o’t was ne’er seen in braid Scotland. It will be Indian, I se warrant.”

“ Real Indian ! ” said Mr Touchwood, in an accent of disdain, which disturbed Mrs Blower’s equanimity,—“ why, what do you suppose it should be, madam ? ”

“ Dinna ken, sir,” said she, edging somewhat nearer the Doctor, being altogether pleased, as she afterwards allowed, with the out-of-shape appearance and sharp tone of the traveller ; then pulling her drapery round her shoulders, she added, courageously, “ There are raw shawls made at Paisley, that ye will scarce ken frae foreign.” “ Not know Paisley shawls from Indian, madam ! ” said Touchwood ; “ why, a blind man could tell by the slightest touch of his finger. Yon shawl, now, is the handsomest I have seen in India—and at this distance I can tell it to be a real *Tozie*.”

“ Cozie may she weel be that wears it,” said Mrs Blower. “ I care, now I look on’t again, it’s a perfect beauty.”

“ It is called *Tozie*, ma’am, not *cozie*,” continued the traveller ; “ the Shroffs at Surat told me in 1801, that it is made out of the coat of a goat.”

“ Of a sheep, sir, I am thinking ye mean, for goats has nae ‘woo’.” “ Not much of it, indeed, madam ; but you are to understand they only the inmost coat ! and then their dyes—that *Tozie* now will keep its colour while there is a rag of it left—men bequeath them in their wills to their grandchildren.”

“ And a very bonny colour it is,” said the dame ; “ something like a peacock’s back, only a thought redder—I wonder what they call that colour.”

“ The colour is much admired, madam,” said Touchwood, who was now on a favourite topic ; “ the Mussulmans say the colour is next that of an elephant and the breast of the *faughta*.”

“ In troth, I am as wise as I was,” said Mrs Blower.

“ The *faughta*, madam, so called by the Moors (for the Hindhus call it *hollah*), is a sort of pigeon, held sacred among the Moslem people, because they think it dyed its breast in the blood of Ali—But they are closing the scene.—Mr Cargill, are you composing a sermon, my good friend, or what can you be thinking of ? ”

Mr Cargill had, during the whole scene, remained with his eyes fixed in intent and anxious, although almost unconscious gaze, upon

Clara Mowbray; and when the voice of his companion startled him out of his reverie, he exclaimed, "Most lovely—most unhappy—yes, I must and will see her!"

"See her?" replied Touchwood, too much accustomed to his friend's singularities to look for much reason or connection in a thing he said or did; "Why, you shall see her and talk to her, if that will give you pleasure. They say now," he continued, lowering his voice to a whisper, "that this Mowbray is ruined. I know nothing like it, since he can dress out his sister like a Begum. Have you ever seen such a splendid shawl?"

"Dearly purchased splendour," said Mr Cargill, with a deep sigh, "I wish that the price be yet fully paid!"

"Very likely not," said the traveller; "very likely it's gone to the book; and for the price, I have known a thousand rupees given for such a shawl in the country. But hush, hush, we are to hear another tune from Nathaniel—faith, and they are withdrawing the screen. Well, they have some mercy—they do not let us wait long between the acts of their follies at least—I love a quick and rattling fire in these vanities. Folly walking a funeral pace, and clinking bells to the time of a passing knell, makes sad work indeed."

A strain of music, beginning slowly, and terminating in a light and wild allegro, introduced on the stage those delightful creatures of the richest imagination that ever teemed with wonders, the Oberon and Titania of Shakespeare. The pigmy majesty of the captain of the fairy band had no unapt representative in Miss Digges, whose modesty was not so great an intruder as to prevent her desire to present him in all his dignity, and she moved, conscious of the graceful turn of a pretty ankle, which, encircled with a string of pearls, and clothed in flesh-coloured silk, of the most cob-web texture, rose above the crimson sandal. Her jewelled tiara, too, gave dignity to the frown with which the offended King of Shadows greeted his consort, as each entered upon the scene at the head of their several attendants.

The restlessness of the children had been duly considered, and therefore their part of the exhibition had been contrived to represent dumbshow, rather than a stationary picture. The little Queen of Elves was not inferior in action to her moody lord, and repulsed with a look of female impatience and scorn, the haughty air which seemed to express his sullen greeting,

"Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania."

The other children were, as usual, some clever and forward, some loutish and awkward enough; but the gambols of childhood were sure to receive applause, paid, perhaps, with a mixture of jealousy and envy, by those in advanced life; and, besides, there were in company several fond papas and mammas, whose clamorous approbation, though given apparently to the whole performers, was especially dedicated in their hearts to their own little Jackies Marias—for *Mary*, though the prettiest and most classical of Scotch names, is now unknown in the land. The elves, therefore, played their frolics, danced a measure, and vanished with good approbation.

the anti-mask, as it may be called, of Bottom, and his company actors, next appeared on the stage, and a thunder of applause greeted the young Earl, who had, with infinite taste and dexterity, transformed himself into the similitude of an Athenian clown; observing the Grecian costume, yet so judiciously discriminated from the dress of the higher characters as at once to fix the character of a half-skinned mechanic on the wearer. Touchwood, in particular, loud in his approbation, from which the correctness of the costume must be inferred; for that honest gentleman, like many others, was indeed not very much distinguished for good taste, but possessed a capital memory for petty matters of fact; and, while the most expressive look or gesture of an actor might have failed to interest him, he would have censured most severely the fashion of a sleeve, or the colour of a shoe-tie.

But the Earl of Etherington's merits were not confined to his external appearance; for, had his better fortunes failed him, his talents, like those of Hamlet, might have got him a fellowship in a company of players. He presented, though in dumb show, the pragmatic imitation of Bottom, to the infinite amusement of all present, especially those who were well acquainted with the original; and when he "translated" by Puck, he bore the ass's head, his newly-acquired identity, with an appearance of conscious greatness, which made the metamorphosis, though in itself sufficiently farcical, irresistibly comic. Mowbray afterwards displayed the same humour in his frolics with the fairies, and the intercourse which he held with Messrs Cobweb, Tartar-seed, Pease-blossom, and the rest of Titania's cavaliers, who obeyed his command of their countenances at the gravity with which he directed them to afford him the luxury of scratching his hairy snout. Mowbray had also found a fitting representative for Puck in a queer-looking, small-eyed boy of the Aultoun of St Ronan's, with large ears projecting from his head like turrets from a Gothic building. This exotic animal personified the merry and mocking spirit of Hobgoblin with considerable power, so that the group bore some resemblance to the well-known and exquisite delineation of Puck by Sir Joshua, in the select collection of the Bard of Memory. It was, however, the ruin of the St Ronan's Robin Goodfellow, who did not long afterwards,—“gaid an ill gate,” as Meg Dods said, and “took away” with a party of strolling players.

The entertainment closed with a grand parade of all the characters who had appeared, during which Mowbray concluded that the young Earl himself, unremarked, might have time enough to examine the outward form, at least, of his sister Clara, whom, in the pride of his heart, he could not help considering superior in beauty, dressed as she now was, with every advantage of art, even to the brilliant complexion of Lady Binks. It is true, Mowbray was not a man to give precedence to the intellectual expression of poor Clara's features over the sultana-like beauty of the haughty dame, which promised to announce all the vicissitudes that can be expressed by a countenance in every change, and changing as often as an ardent and impetuous disposition, unused to constraint, and despising admonition, would please to dictate. Yet to do him justice, though his prefer-

ence was perhaps dictated more by fraternal partiality than by pur of taste, he certainly, on the present occasion, felt the full extent Clara's superiority; and there was a proud smile on his lip, as, at the conclusion of the divertisement, he asked the Earl how he had been pleased. The rest of the performers had separated, and the young lord remained on the stage, employed in disembarassing himself from his awkward vizor, when Mowbray put this question, to which, though general in terms, he naturally gave a particular meaning.

"I could wear my ass's head for ever," he said, "on condition that my eyes were to be so delightfully employed as they have been during the last scene. Mowbray, your sister is an angel!"

"Have a care that that head-piece of yours has not perverted your taste, my lord," said Mowbray. "But why did you wear that disguise on your last appearance? You should, I think, have been uncovered."

"I am ashamed to answer you," said the Earl; "but truth is, first impressions are of consequence, and I thought I might do as wisely not to appear before your sister, for the first time, in the character of Bully Bottom."

"Then you change your dress, my lord, for dinner, if we call our luncheon by that name?" said Mowbray.

"I am going to my room this instant for that very purpose," replied the Earl.

"And I," said Mowbray, "must step in front, and dismiss the audience; for I see they are sitting gaping there, waiting for another scene."

They parted upon this; and Mowbray, as Duke Theseus, stepping before the screen, and announcing the conclusion of the drama, the pictures which they had had the honour to present before the worshipful company, thanked the spectators for the very favourable reception which they had afforded; and intimated to them, that if they could amuse themselves by strolling for an hour among the gardens, a bell would summon to the house at the expiry of that time, when some refreshments would wait their acceptance. This announcement was received with the applause due to the *Amphitryon ou l'on din*, and the guests, arising from before the temporary theatre, dispersed through the gardens, which were of some extent, to seek for or create amusement to themselves. The music greatly aided them in their last purpose, and it was not long ere a dozen of couples and upwards were "tripping it on the light fantastic toe" (I love a phrase that is not hackneyed) to the tune of Monymusk.

Others strolled through the grounds, meeting some quaint disguise at the end of every verdant alley, and communicating to others the surprise and amusement which they themselves were receiving. The scene, from the variety of dresses, the freedom which it gave to the play of humour amongst such as possessed any, and the general disposition to give and receive pleasure, rendered the little masquerade more entertaining than others of the kind, for which more ample and magnificent preparations have been made. There was also a singular and pleasing contrast between the fantastic figures who wandered through the gardens, and the quiet scene itself, to which the old clipt hedges, the formal distribution of the ground, and

ated appearance of one or two fountains and artificial cascades, which the naiads had been for the nonce compelled to resume ancient frolics, gave an appearance of unusual simplicity and on, and which seemed rather to belong to the last than to the t generation.

CHAPTER XXI.

PERPLEXITIES.

For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love, strewing his way with flowers.

Love's Labour Lost.

Worthies away—the scene begins to cloud.

Ibidem.

TOUCHWOOD and his inseparable friend, Mr Cargill, wandered amidst the gay groups we have described, the former censuring with great scorn the frequent attempts which he observed towards imitation of the costume of the East, and appealing with self-licence to his own superior representation, as he greeted, in French and in Persic, the several turbaned figures who passed his while the clergyman, whose mind seemed to labour with some great and important project, looked in every direction for the fair representative of Helena, but in vain. At length he caught a glimpse of a memorable shawl which had drawn forth so learned a discussion from his companion; and starting from Touchwood's side with an air of anxious alertness totally foreign to his usual habits, he hurried to join the person by whom it was worn.

"The Lord," said his companion, "the Doctor is beside himself! The parson is mad!—the divine is out of his senses, that is clear; now the devil can he, who scarce can find his road from the church to his own Manse, venture himself unprotected into such a state of confusion?—he might as well pretend to cross the Atlantic without a pilot—I must push off in chase of him, lest worse come

the traveller was prevented from executing his friendly purpose by a sort of crowd which came rushing down the alley, the centre of which was occupied by Captain MacTurk, in the very act of bullying a party of pseudo-Highlanders, for having presumed to lay aside their arms before they had acquired the Gaelic language. The sounds of contempt and insult with which the genuine Celt was overwhelmed by the unfortunate impostors, were not, indeed, intelligible other than from the tone and manner of the speaker; but these intensified so much displeasure, that the plaided forms, whose unadvised assumption of a disguise had provoked it—two raw lads from a certain manufacturing town—heartily repented their temerity, and in the act of seeking for the speediest exit from the gardens; choosing to resign their share of the dinner, than to abide the

farther consequences which might follow from the displeasure of Highland Termagaunt.

Touchwood had scarcely extricated himself from this impediment and again commenced his researches after the clergyman, when his course was once more interrupted by a sort of pressgang, headed by Sir Bingo Binks, who, in order to play his character of a drunken swain to the life, seemed certainly drunk enough, however little of a seaman. His cheer sounded more like a view-hollo than a hail, and with a volley of such oaths as would have blown a whole fleet of Bethel Union out of the water, he ordered Touchwood "to come under his lee, and be d—d; for, smash his old timbers, he must go to sea again, for as weatherbeaten a hulk as he was."

Touchwood answered instantly, "To sea with all my heart, but with a land-lubber for commander.—Harkye, brother, do you know how much of a horse's furniture belongs to a ship?"

"Come, none of your quizzing, my old buck," said Sir Bingo. "What the devil has a ship to do with horse's furniture?—Do you think we belong to the horse-marines?—ha! ha! I think you are matched, brother."

"Why, you son of a fresh-water gudgeon," replied the traveller, "that never in your life sailed farther than the Isle of Dogs, do not pretend to play a sailor, and not know the bridle of the bow and the saddle of the bolt-sprit, and the bit for the cable, and the girth to hoist the rigging, and the whip to serve for small tackle. There is a trick for you to find out an Abramman, and save sixpence when he begs of you as a disbanded seaman.—Get along with you, or the constable shall be charged with the whole pressgang to the workhouse."

A general laugh arose at the detection of the swaggering swain; and all that the Baronet had for it was to sneak off saying, "D—n the old quiz, who the devil thought to have heard so much slang from an old muslin nightcap?"

Touchwood being now an object of some attention, was followed by two or three stragglers, whom he endeavoured to rid himself of the best way he could, testifying an impatience a little inconsistent with the decorum of his Oriental demeanour, but which arose from his desire to rejoin his companion, and some apprehension of inconvenience which he feared Cargill might sustain during his absence. For, being in fact as good-natured a man as any in the world, Touchwood was at the same time one of the most conceited, and very apt to suppose that his presence, advice, and assistance were of the most indispensable consequence to those with whom he came in contact, and that not only on great emergencies, but even in the most ordinary occurrences of life.

Meantime Mr Cargill, whom he sought in vain, was, on his side, anxiously keeping in sight of the beautiful Indian shawl, which he held as a flag to announce to him the vessel which he held in chase. At length he approached so close as to say, in an anxious whisper, "Mowbray—Miss Mowbray—I must speak with you."

"And what would you have with Miss Mowbray?" said the traveller, "wearer of the beautiful shawl, but without turning round her

have a secret—an important secret, of which to make you ; but it is not for this place.—Do not turn from me!—Your less in this, and perhaps in the next life, depends on your listen-me.”

lady led the way, as if to give him an opportunity of speaking er more privately, to one of those old-fashioned and deeply-er recesses, which are commonly found in such gardens as Shaws-Castle; and, with her shawl wrapped around her head, in some degree to conceal her features, she stood before Mr t in the doubtful light and shadow of a huge platanus tree, formed the canopy of the arbour, and seemed to await the unication he had promised.

port says,” said the clergyman, speaking in an eager and d manner, yet with a low voice, and like one desirous of being by her whom he addressed, and by no one else,—“Report says ou are about to be married.”

d is report kind enough to say to whom?” answered the lady, tone of indifference which seemed to astound her interrogator. ung lady,” he answered, with a solemn voice, “had this levity worn to me, I could never have believed it? Have you forgot cumstances in which you stand?—Have you forgotten that my e of secresy, sinful perhaps even in that degree, was but a onal promise?—or did you think that a being so sequestered as as already dead to the world, even while he was walking upon ace?—Know, young lady, that I am indeed dead to the plea-nd the ordinary business of life, but I am even therefore the live to its duties.”

on my honour, sir, unless you are pleased to be more explicit, possible for me either to answer or understand you,” said the “you speak too seriously for a masquerade pleasantry, and yet early enough to make your earnest comprehensible.”

this sullenness, Miss Mowbray?” said the clergyman, with sed animation; “Is it levity?—Or is it alienation of mind?—after a fever of the brain we retain a recollection of the causes illness.—Come, you must and do understand me, when I say will not consent to your committing a great crime to attain al wealth and rank, no, not to make you an empress. My path ar one; and should I hear a whisper breathed of your alliance is Earl, or whatever he may be, rely upon it, that I will with- he veil, and make your brother, your bridegroom, and the world, acquainted with the situation in which you stand, and possibility of your forming the alliance which you propose to f, I am compelled to say, against the laws of God and man.”

, sir—sir,” answered the lady, rather eagerly than anxiously, ave not yet told me what business you have with my marriage, t arguments you can bring against it.”

lam,” replied Mr Cargill, “in your present state of mind, and a scene as this, I cannot enter upon a topic for which the is unfit, and you, I am sorry to say, are totally unprepared. ough that you know the grounds on which you stand. At a opportunity, I will, as it is my duty, lay before you the enormity

of what you are said to have meditated, with the freedom which becomes one, who, however humble, is appointed to explain to fellow-creatures the laws of his Maker. In the mean time, I am afraid that you will take any hasty step, after such a warning this."

So saying, he turned from the lady with that dignity which a conscious discharge of duty confers, yet, at the same time, with a shadow of deep pain, inflicted by the careless levity of her whom he addressed. She did not any longer attempt to detain him, but made her escape from the arbour by one alley, as she heard voices which seemed to approach it from another. The Clergyman, who took the opposite direction, met in full encounter a whispering and tittering pair, who, seemed, at his sudden appearance, to check their tone of familiarity and assume an appearance of greater distance towards each other. The lady was no other than the fair Queen of the Amazons, who seemed to have adopted the recent partiality of Titania towards Bully Bottom, being in conference such and so close as we have described, with the late representative of the Athenian weaver, whose recent visit to his chamber had metamorphosed into the more gallant disguise of an ancient Spanish cavalier. He now appeared with elegant and drooping plume, sword, poniard, and guitar, richly dressed on all points, as for a serenade beneath his mistress's window; a mask at the breast of his embroidered doublet hung ready to be assumed in case of intrusion, as an appropriate part of the national dress.

It sometimes happened to Mr Cargill, as we believe it may chance to other men much subject to absence of mind, that contrary to their wont, and much after the manner of a sunbeam suddenly piercing a deep mist, and illuminating one particular object in the landscape, some sudden recollection rushes upon them, and seems to compel them to act under it, as under the influence of complete certainty and conviction. Mr Cargill had no sooner set eyes on the Spanish Cavalier, in whom he neither knew the Earl of Etherington, nor recognised Bully Bottom, than with hasty emotion he seized on the reluctant hand, and exclaimed, with a mixture of eagerness and solemnity, "I rejoice to see you!—Heaven has sent you here in your own good time."

"I thank you, sir," replied Lord Etherington, very coldly, "I believe you have the joy of the meeting entirely on your side, and cannot remember having seen you before."

"Is not your name Bulmer?" said the clergyman. "I—I know—I am sometimes apt to make mistakes—But I am sure your name is Bulmer?"

"Not that ever I or my godfathers heard of—my name was James Bottom half an hour ago—perhaps that makes the confusion," answered the Earl, with very cold and distant politeness;—"Permit me to pass, sir, that I may attend the lady."

"Quite unnecessary," answered Lady Binks; "I leave you to adjust your mutual recollections with your new old friend, my husband—he seems to have something to say." So saying, the lady walked on, not perhaps sorry of an opportunity to show apparent indifference.

for his lordship's society, in the presence of one who had surrounded them in what might seem a moment of exuberant intimacy.

"You detain me, sir," said the Earl of Etherington to Mr Cargill, bewildered and uncertain, still kept himself placed so directly before the young nobleman, as to make it impossible for him to pass, without absolutely pushing him to one side. "I must really attend my lady," he added, making another effort to walk on.

"Young man," said Mr Cargill, "you cannot disguise yourself from me. I am sure—my mind assures me, that you are that very person whom Heaven hath sent here to prevent crime."

"And you," said Lord Etherington, "whom my mind assures me I never saw in my life, are sent hither by the devil, I think, to create confusion."

"I beg pardon, sir," said the clergyman, staggered by the calm and pertinacious denial of the Earl—"I beg pardon if I am in a mistake—that is, if I am *really* in a mistake—but I am not—I am not—I am not—That look—that smile—I am not mistaken. You are Valentine Bulmer—the very Valentine Bulmer whom I—but I do not make your private affairs any part of this exposition—Enough, you *are* Valentine Bulmer."

"Valentine?—Valentine?" answered Lord Etherington, impatiently—"I am neither Valentine nor Orson—I wish you good-night, sir."

"Stay, sir, stay, I charge you," said the clergyman; "if you are unwilling to be known yourself, it may be because you have forgotten who I am—Let me name myself as the Reverend Josiah Cargill, Minister of St Ronan's."

"If you bear a character so venerable, sir," replied the young gentleman,—"in which, however, I am not in the least interested,—I think when you make your morning draught a little too potent, it might be as well for you to stay at home and sleep it off, before you come into company."

"In the name of Heaven, young gentleman," said Mr Cargill, laying aside this untimely and unseemly jesting! and tell me if you be—as I cannot but still believe you to be—that same youth, who, seven years since, left in my deposit a solemn secret, which, if I should unfold to the wrong person, woe would be my own heart, and the consequences which might ensue!"

"You are very pressing with me, sir," said the Earl; "and, in exchange, I will be equally frank with you.—I am not the man whom you mistake me for, and you may go seek him where you will. It will be still more lucky for you if you chance to find your own name in the course of your researches; for I must tell you plainly, I think they are gone somewhat astray." So saying, with a gesture expressive of a determined purpose to pass on, Mr Cargill had no alternative but to make way, and suffer him to proceed.

The worthy clergyman stood as if rooted to the ground, and, with his usual habit of thinking aloud, exclaimed to himself, "My fancy played me many a bewildering trick, but this is the most extraordinary of them all!—What can this young man think of me? It must have been my conversation with that unhappy young lady that

has made such an impression upon me as to deceive my very eyesight, and causes me to connect with her history the face of the ne person that I met—What *must* the stranger think of me?”

“Why, what every one thinks of thee that knows thee, prophet said the friendly voice of Touchwood, accompanying his speech with an awakening slap on the clergyman’s shoulder; “and that is, thou art an unfortunate philosopher of Laputa, who has lost his flapp in the throng.—Come along—having me once more by your side, you need fear nothing. Why, now I look at you closer, you look as if you had seen a basilisk—not that there is any such thing, otherwise I must have seen it myself, in the course of my travels—but you seem pale and frightened—What the devil is the matter?”

“Nothing,” answered the clergyman, “except that I have even this very moment made an egregious fool of myself.”

“Pooh, pooh, that is nothing to sigh over, prophet.—Every man does so at least twice in the four-and-twenty hours,” said Touchwood.

“But I had nearly betrayed to a stranger a secret deeply concerning the honour of an ancient family.”

“That was wrong, Doctor,” said Touchwood; “take care of that in future; and, indeed, I would advise you not to speak even to your beadle, Johnie Tirlsneck, until you have assured yourself, by at least three pertinent questions and answers, that you have the said Johnie corporeally and substantially in presence before you, and that your fancy has not invested some stranger with honest Johnie’s singe periwig and threadbare brown joesph—Come along—come along.”

So saying, he hurried forward the perplexed clergyman, who in vain made all the excuses he could think of in order to effect his escape from the scene of gaiety, in which he was so unexpectedly involved. He pleaded headache; and his friend assured him that a mouthful of food and a glass of wine would mend it. He stated he had business; and Touchwood replied that he could have none but composing his next sermon, and reminded him that it was two days till Sunday. At length Mr Cargill confessed that he had some reluctance again to see the stranger, on whom he had endeavoured with such pertinacity to fix an acquaintance, which he was now well assured existed only in his own imagination. The traveller treated his scruples with scorn, and said that guests meeting in this general manner had no more to do with each other than if they were assembled in a caravansary.

“So that you need not say a word to him in the way of apology or otherwise—or, what will be still better, I, who have seen so much of the world, will make the pretty speech for you.” As they spoke he dragged the divine towards the house, where they were now summoned by the appointed signal, and where the company were assembling in the old saloon already noticed, previous to passing into the dining-room, where the refreshments were prepared. “Now, Doctor,” continued the busy friend of Mr Cargill, “let us see which of all these people has been the subject of your blunder. Is it yon animal of a Highlandman?—or the impertinent brute that wants to be thought a boatswain? or which of them all is it?—Ay, here they come, two and two, Newgate fashion—the young Lord of the Manor with old

dy Penelope—does he set up for Ulysses, I wonder?—The Earl of Etherington with Lady Bingo—methinks it should have been with ss Mowbray.”

“The Earl of what, did you say?” quoth the clergyman, anxiously. “How is it you titled that young man in the Spanish dress?”

“Oho!” said the traveller; “what, I have discovered the goblin that scared you?—Come along—come along—I will make you acquainted with him.” So saying, he dragged him towards Lord Etherington; and before the divine could make his negative intelligible, the ceremony of introduction had taken place. “My Lord Etherington, allow me to present Mr Cargill, minister of this parish—a learned gentleman, whose head is often in the Holy Land, when his person is present among his friends. He suffers extremely, my lord, under the sense of mistaking your lordship for the Lord knows who; but when you are acquainted with him you will find that he can make a hundred stranger mistakes than that, so we hope that your lordship will take no prejudice or offence.”

“There can be no offence taken where no offence is intended,” said Lord Etherington, with much urbanity. “It is I who ought to beg the reverend gentleman’s pardon, for hurrying from him without allowing him to make a complete eclaireissement. I beg his pardon for an abruptness which the place and the time—for I was immediately engaged in a lady’s service—rendered unavoidable.”

Mr Cargill gazed on the young nobleman as he pronounced these words, with the easy indifference of one who apologises to an inferior order to maintain his own character for politeness, but with perfect indifference whether his excuses are or are not held satisfactory. And as the clergyman gazed, the belief which had so strongly clung to him that the Earl of Etherington and young Valentine Bulmer were the same individual person, melted away like frost-work before the morning sun, and that so completely that he marvelled at himself for having ever entertained it. Some strong resemblance of features there must have been to have led him into such a delusion; but the person, the tone, the manner of expression, were absolutely different; and his attention being now especially directed towards these particulars, Mr Cargill was inclined to think the two persons almost totally dissimilar.

The clergyman had now only to make his apology, and fall back from the head of the table to some lower seat, which his modesty would have preferred, when he was suddenly seized upon by the Lady Penelope Penfeather, who, detaining him in the most elegant and persuasive manner possible, insisted that they should be introduced to each other by Mr Mowbray, and that Mr Cargill should sit beside her at table.—She had heard so much of his learning—so much of his excellent character—desired so much to make his acquaintance, that she could not think of losing an opportunity, which Mr Cargill’s retired seclusion rendered so very rare—in a word, catching the Jack Lion was the order of the day; and her ladyship, having trapped her prey, soon sat triumphant with him by her side.

A second separation was thus effected betwixt Touchwood and his friend; for the former, not being included in the invitation, or,

indeed, at all noticed by Lady Penelope, was obliged to find room a lower part of the table, where he excited much surprise by the dexterity with which he despatched boiled rice with chop-sticks.

Mr Cargill being thus exposed, without a consort, to the fire Lady Penelope, speedily found it so brisk and incessant, as to draw his complaisance, little tried as it had been for many years by similar talk, almost to extremity. She began by begging him to draw his chair close, for an instinctive terror of fine ladies had made him keep his distance. At the same time she hoped "he was not afraid of her as an Episcopalian; her father had belonged to that communion for," she added, with what was intended for an arch smile, "we were somewhat naughty in the forty-five, as you may have heard; but that was over, and she was sure Mr Cargill was too liberal to entertain any dislike or shyness on that score.—She could assure him she was far from disliking the Presbyterian form—indeed she had often wished to hear it, where she was sure to be both delighted and edified (here a gracious smile) "in the church of St Ronan's—and hoped to do so whenever Mr Mowbray had got a stove, which he had ordered from Edinburgh, on purpose to air his pew for her accommodation."

All this, which was spoken with wreathed smiles and nods, and much civility as to remind the clergyman of a cup of tea over-sweetened to conceal its want of strength and flavour, required and received no farther answer than an accommodating look and acquiescent bow.

"Ah, Mr Cargill," continued the inexhaustible Lady Penelope, "your profession has so many demands on the heart as well as the understanding—is so much connected with the kindnesses and charities of our nature—with our best and purest feelings, Mr Cargill, You know what Goldsmith says:—

——— 'in his duty prompt at every call,
He watch'd, and wept, and felt, and pray'd for all.'

And then Dryden has such a picture of a parish priest, so inimitable, one would think, did we not hear now and then of some living moral presuming to emulate its features" (here another insinuating nod and expressive smile).

" ' Refined himself to soul to curb the sense,
And almost made a sin of abstinence.
Yet had his aspect nothing of severe,
But such a face as promised him sincere;
Nothing reserved or sullen was to see,
But sweet regard and pleasing sanctity. ' "

While her ladyship declaimed, the clergyman's wandering eye confessed his absent mind; his thoughts travelling, perhaps, to accomplish a truce betwixt Saladin and Conrad of Mounserrat, unless they chanced to be occupied with some occurrences of that very day, that the lady was obliged to recall her indocile auditor with the leading question, "You are well acquainted with Dryden, of course, Mr Cargill?"

"I have not the honour, madam," said Mr Cargill, starting from his reverie, and but half understanding the question he replied to.

"Sir!" said the lady, in surprise.

"Madam!—my lady!" answered Mr Cargill, in embarrassment.

"I asked you if you admired Dryden;—but you learned men are absent—perhaps you thought I said Leyden."

"A lamp too early quenched, madam," said Mr Cargill; "I knew it well."

"And so did I," eagerly replied the lady of the cerulean buskin; "he spoke ten languages—how mortifying to poor me, Mr Cargill, who could only boast of five!—but I have studied a little since that time—I must have you to help me in my studies, Mr Cargill—it will be charitable—but perhaps you are afraid of a female pupil?"

A thrill, arising from former recollections, passed through poor Cargill's mind with as much acuteness as the pass of a rapier might have done through his body; and we cannot help remarking, that a forward prater in society, like a busy bustler in a crowd, besides all her general points of annoyance, is eternally rubbing upon some tender point, and galling men's feelings, without knowing or regarding it.

"You must assist me, besides, in my little charities, Mr Cargill, now that you and I are become so well acquainted.—There is that poor Heggie—I sent her a trifle yesterday, but I am told—I should not mention it, but only one would not have the little they have to stow lavished on an improper object—I am told she is not quite proper—an unwedded mother in short, Mr Cargill—and it would be peculiarly unbecoming in me to encourage profligacy."

"I believe, madam," said the clergyman, gravely, "the poor woman's distress may justify your ladyship's bounty, even if her conduct has been faulty."

"Oh, I am no prude, neither, I assure you, Mr Cargill," answered the lady Penelope. "I never withdraw my countenance from any one but on the most irrefragable grounds. I could tell you of an intimate friend of my own, whom I have supported against the whole clamour of the people at the Well, because I believe, from the bottom of my soul, she is only thoughtless—nothing in the world but thoughtless—O Mr Cargill, how can you look across the table so intelligently? who would have thought it of you?—Oh fie, to make such personal imputations!"

"Upon my word, madam, I am quite at a loss to comprehend——"

"Oh fie, fie, Mr Cargill," throwing in as much censure and surprise as a confidential whisper can convey—"you looked at my Lady Penelope—I know what you think, but you are quite wrong, I assure you; you are entirely wrong.—I wish she would not flirt quite so much with that young Lord Etherington though, Mr Cargill—her situation is particular.—Indeed, I believe she wears out his patience; for see he is leaving the room before we sit down—how singular!—and then, do you not think it very odd, too, that Miss Mowbray has not come down to us?"

"Miss Mowbray!—what of Miss Mowbray—is she not here?" said Mr Cargill, starting, and with an expression of interest which he had never yet bestowed on any of her ladyship's liberal communications.

"Ay, poor Miss Mowbray," said Lady Penelope, lowering her

voice, and shaking her head; "she has not appeared—her brother went up-stairs a few minutes since, I believe, to bring her down, so we are all left here to look at each other.—How very awkward! But you know Clara Mowbray?"

"I, madam?" said Mr Cargill, who was now sufficiently attentive. "I really—I know Miss Mowbray—that is, I knew her some years since—but your ladyship knows she has been long in bad health, uncertain health at least, and I have seen nothing of the young lady for a very long time."

"I know it, my dear Mr Cargill—I know it," continued the Lady Penelope, in the same tone of deep sympathy, "I know it; and my unhappy surely have been the circumstances that have separated me from your advice and friendly counsel.—All this I am aware of—to say truth, it has been chiefly on poor Clara's account that I have been giving you the trouble of fixing an acquaintance upon you. You and I together, Mr Cargill, might do wonders to cure her unhappy state of mind—I am sure we might—that is, if you could bring your mind to repose absolute confidence in me."

"Has Miss Mowbray desired your ladyship to converse with me upon any subject which interests her?" said the clergyman, with more cautious shrewdness than Lady Penelope had suspected him of possessing. "I will in that case be happy to hear the nature of her communication; and whatever my poor services can perform, your ladyship may command them."

"I—I—I cannot just assert," said her ladyship with hesitation, "that I have Miss Mowbray's direct instructions to speak to you, Mr Cargill, upon the present subject. But my affection for the dear girl is so very great—and then, you know, the inconveniences which may arise from this match."

"From which match, Lady Penelope?" said Mr Cargill.

"Nay, now, Mr Cargill, you really carry the privilege of Scotland too far—I have not put a single question to you, but what you have answered by another—let us converse intelligibly for five minutes if you can but condescend so far."

"For any length of time which your ladyship may please to command," said Mr Cargill, "provided the subject regard your ladyship's own affairs or mine,—could I suppose these last for a moment likely to interest you?"

"Out upon you," said the lady laughing affectedly; "you should really have been a Catholic priest instead of a Presbyterian. What an invaluable father confessor have the fair sex lost in you, Mr Cargill, and how dexterously you would have evaded any cross-examination which might have committed your penitents!"

"Your ladyship's raillery is far too severe for me to withstand in reply to," said Mr Cargill, bowing with more ease than her ladyship expected; and, retiring gently backward, he extricated himself from a conversation which he began to find somewhat embarrassing.

At that moment a murmur of surprise took place in the apartment which was just entered by Miss Mowbray, leaning on her brother's arm. The cause of this murmur will be best understood, by narrating what had passed betwixt the brother and sister.

CHAPTER XXII.

EXPOSTULATION.

Seek not the feast in these irreverent robes ;
Go to my chamber—put on clothes of mine.

The Taming of the Shrew.

was with a mixture of anxiety, vexation, and resentment, that Mowbray, just when he had handed Lady Penelope into the apartment, where the tables were covered, observed that his sister was absent, and that Lady Binks was hanging on the arm of Lord Etherington, to whose rank it would properly have fallen to escort the lady to the house. An anxious and hasty glance cast through the room, ascertained that she was absent, nor could the ladies present give any account of her after she had quitted the gardens, except that Lady Penelope had spoken a few words with her in her own apartment, immediately after the scenic entertainment was concluded.

Thither Mowbray hurried, complaining aloud of his sister's laziness in dressing, but internally hoping that the delay was occasioned by something of a more important character.

He hastened up-stairs, entered her sitting-room without ceremony, knocking at the door of her dressing-room, begged her to make

haste. "Here is the whole company impatient," he said, assuming a tone of easyantry; "and Sir Bingo Binks exclaiming for your presence, and he may be let loose on the cold meat."

"Paddock calls," said Clara from within; "anon—anon!"

"Nay, it is no jest, Clara," continued her brother; "for Lady Penelope is miauling like a starved cat!"

"I come—I come, greymalkin," answered Clara, in the same vein of raillery, and entered the parlour as she spoke, her finery entirely thrown aside, and dressed in the riding-habit which was her usual favourite attire.

Her brother was both surprised and offended. "On my soul," he said, "Clara, this is behaving very ill. I indulge you in every freak on ordinary occasions, but you might surely on this day, of all days, have condescended to appear something like my sister, and a new woman receiving company in her own house."

"Why, dearest John," said Clara, "so that the guests have something to eat and drink, I cannot conceive why I should concern myself about their finery, or they trouble themselves about my plain dresses."

"Come, come, Clara, this will not do," answered Mowbray; "you must positively go back into your dressing-room, and huddle yourself on as fast as you can. You cannot go down to the company dressed as you are."

"I certainly can, and I certainly will, John—I have made a fool of myself once this morning to oblige you, and for the rest of the

day I am determined to appear in my own dress; that is, in which shows I neither belong to the world, nor wish to have any to do with its fashions."

"By my soul, Clara, I will make you repent this!" said Mowbray, with more violence than he usually exhibited where his sister was concerned.

"You cannot, dear John," she coolly replied, "unless by beating me; and that I think you would repent of yourself."

"I do not know but what it were the best way of managing you," said Mowbray, muttering between his teeth; but, commanding himself to violence, he only said aloud, "I am sure, from long experience, Clara, that your obstinacy will at the long run beat my anger. Let us compound the point for once—keep your old habit, since you are so fond of making a sight of yourself, and only throw the shawl round your shoulders—it has been exceedingly admired, and every woman in the house longs to see it closer—they can hardly be so sure it is genuine."

"Do be a man, Mowbray," answered his sister; "meddle with your horse-sheets, and leave shawls alone."

"Do you be a woman, Clara, and think a little on them, where custom and decency render it necessary.—Nay, is it possible!—do you not stir—not oblige me in such a trifle as this?"

"I would indeed if I could," said Clara; "but since you know the truth—do not be angry—I have not the shawl. I have given it away—given it up, perhaps I should say, to the right owner.—She has promised me something or other in exchange for it, however. I have given it to Lady Penelope."

"Yes," answered Mowbray, "some of the work of her own hands, I suppose, or a couple of her ladyship's drawings, made into fire screens.—On my word—on my soul, this is too bad!—using me too ill, Clara—far too ill. If the thing had been of no value, my giving it to you should have fixed some upon it.—Good-evening to you; we will do as well as we can without you."

"Nay, but, my dear John—stay but a moment," said Clara, taking his arm as he sullenly turned towards the door; "there are but two of us on earth—do not let us quarrel about a trumpery shawl."

"Trumpery!" said Mowbray; "It cost fifty guineas, by which I can but ill spare—trumpery!"

"Oh, never think of the cost," said Clara; "it was your gift that should, I own, have been enough to have made me keep it to my death's day the poorest rag of it. But really Lady Penelope looks so very miserable, and twisted her poor face into so many odd expressions of anger and chagrin, that I resigned it to her, and agreed to say she had lent it to me for the performance. I believe she was afraid that I would change my mind, or that you would resume it as a seigniorial waif; for, after she had walked a few turns with it wrapped around her, merely by way of taking possession, she dispatched it by a special messenger to her apartment at the Well."

"She may go to the devil," said Mowbray, "for a greedy, unscrupulous jade, who has varnished over a selfish, spiteful heart, is as hard as a flint, with a fine glossing of taste and sensibility."

ay, but, John," replied his sister, "she really had something to complain of in the present case. The shawl had been bespoken on account, or very nearly so—she showed me the tradesman's letter, and some agent of yours had come in between with the ready money, which no tradesman can resist.—Ah, John! I suspect half of the anger is owing to the failure of a plan to mortify Poor Lady Penelope, and that she has more to complain of than you have.—Come, John, you have had the advantage of her in the first display of this piece of finery, if wearing it on my poor shoulders can be called a victory—e'en make her welcome to the rest for peace's sake, and go down to these good folks, and you shall see how pretty and how they shall behave."

Mowbray, a spoiled child, and with all the petted habits of indulgence, was exceedingly fretted at the issue of the scheme which he had formed for mortifying Lady Penelope; but he saw at once the propriety of saying nothing more to his sister on the subject. Ven-erably he privately muttered against Lady Penelope, whom he termed an absolute harpy in blue stockings; unjustly forgetting that, in the important affair at issue, he himself had been the first to interfere with and defeat her ladyship's designs on the garment in question.

"But I will blow her," he said, "I will blow her ladyship's concern in the business! She shall not outwit a poor whimsical girl like Clara, without hearing it on more sides than one."

With this Christian and gentleman-like feeling towards Lady Penelope, he escorted his sister into the eating-room, and led her to her usual place at the head of the table. It was the negligence displayed in her dress which occasioned the murmur of surprise that greeted Clara on her entrance. Mowbray, as he placed his sister in her seat, made her general apology for her late appearance, and her odd habit. "Some fairies," he supposed, "Puck or suchlike mischievous goblin, had been in her wardrobe, and carried off whatever was fit for wearing."

There were answers from every quarter—that it would have been enough to expect Miss Mowbray to dress for their amusement a little time—that nothing she chose to wear could misbecome Miss Mowbray—that she had set like the sun, in her splendid scenic dress, now rose like the full moon in her ordinary attire (this flighty lady the Reverend Mr Chatterly),—and that "Miss Mowbray, at home, had an unco gude right to please herself;" which last of politeness, being at least as much to the purpose as any that preceded it, was the contribution of honest Mrs Blower, and replied to by Miss Mowbray with a particular and most grateful bow.

Mrs Blower ought to have rested her colloquial fame, as Dr Johnson would have said, upon a compliment so evidently acceptable; but no one knows where to stop. She thrust her broad, good-natured, delighted countenance forward, and sending her voice from bottom to the top of the table, like her umquhile husband when he was talking to his mate during a breeze, wondered "why Miss Clara didna wear that grand shawl she had on at the play-mak-

ing, and her just sitting upon the wind of a door. Nae doubt for fear of the soup, and the butter-boats and the like;—but s/ three shawls, which she really fand was ane ower mony—if Mowbrie wad like to wear ane o' them—it was but imitashion, sure—but it wad keep her shouthers as warm as if it were redian, and if it were dirtied it was the less matter.”

“Much obliged, Mrs Blower,” said Mowbray, unable to resist temptation which this speech offered; “but my sister is not quality sufficient to entitle her to rob her friends of their shawl.”

Lady Penelope coloured to the eyes, and bitter was the retort arose to her tongue; but she suppressed it, and nodding to Mowbray in the most friendly way in the world, yet with a particular expression, she only said, “So you have told your brother the little transaction which we have had this morning?—*Tu pagherai*—I give you fair warning, take care none of your s come into my keeping—that's all.”

Upon what mere trifles do the important events of human sometimes depend! If Lady Penelope had given way to her movements of resentment, the probable issue would have been such half-comic, half-serious skirmish, as her ladyship and Mr Mowbray had often amused the company withal. But revenge when suppressed and deferred is always most to be dreaded; and the effects of the deliberate resentment which Lady Penelope cherished upon this trifling occasion, must be traced the events which our story has to record. Secretly did she determine to return the s which she had entertained hopes of making her own upon very reasonable terms; and as secretly did she resolve to be revenged upon brother and sister, conceiving herself already possessed certain degree, of a clew to some part of their family history, which might serve for a foundation on which to raise her projected tery. The ancient offences and emulation of importance of the Laird of St Ronan's, and the superiority which had been given Clara in the exhibition of the day, combined with the immediate cause of resentment; and it only remained for her to consider how her revenge could be most signally accomplished.

Whilst such thoughts were passing through Lady Penelope's mind, Mowbray was searching with his eyes for the Earl of Etherin, judging that it might be proper, in the course of the entertainment or before the guests had separated, to make him formally acquainted with his sister, as a preface to the more intimate connection which must, in prosecution of the plan agreed upon, take place between them. Greatly to his surprise, the young Earl was nowhere visible, and the place which he had occupied by the side of Lady Bink had been quietly appropriated by Winterblossom, as the best and so the choicest of the entertainment is usually arranged. This honest gentleman, after a few insipid compliments to her ladyship upon her performance as Queen of the Amazons, had betaken himself to a much more interesting occupation of ogling the dishes, through the glass which hung suspended at his neck by a gold chain of Masterworkmanship. After looking and wondering for a few seconds

addressed himself to the old beau-garçon, and asked him to become of Etherington.

created," said Winterblossom, "and left but his compliments behind him—a complaint, I think, in his wounded arm.—By word, that soup has a most appetising flavour!—Lady Penelope, shall I have the honour to help you?—no!—nor you, Lady Binks?—you are too cruel!—I must comfort myself, like a priest of old, by eating the sacrifice which the deities have to accept of."

He helped himself to the plate of soup which he had in vain offered to the ladies, and transferred the farther duty of dispensing to his sister Chatterly; "it is your profession, sir, to propitiate the gods—ahem!"

He did not think Lord Etherington would have left us so soon," said Chatterly; "but we must do the best we can without his counsel."

During the evening, he assumed his place at the bottom of the table, and endeavoured to support the character of a hospitable and joyous landlady. On her part, with much natural grace, and delicacy of touch, calculated to set everybody at their ease, his sister presided at the upper end of the board. But the vanishing of Lord Etherington in a manner so sudden and unaccountable—the obvious absence of Lady Penelope—and the steady, though passive, sulking of Lady Binks, spread among the company a gloom like that produced by an autumnal mist upon a pleasing landscape. The ladies were low-spirited, dull, nay, peevish, they did not well know how to do, and the men could not be joyous, though the ready resource of wine and champagne made some of them talkative. Lady Penelope kept up the party by well-feigned apprehension of the difficulties, dangers of returning by so rough a road. Lady Binks occupied a seat with her ladyship, as Sir Bingo, she said, judging from the position to the green flask, was likely to need their carriage. From the moment of their departure it became bad tone to be behind; and all, as in a retreating army, were eager to be first, excepting MacTurk and a few stanch toppers, who, unused to such good cheer every day of their lives, prudently endeavoured to make the most of the opportunity.

Chatterly will not dwell on the difficulties attending the transportation of the large company by few carriages, though the delay and disputes which were occasioned were of course more intolerable than in the past, for the parties had no longer the hopes of a happy day before them, as a bribe to submit to temporary inconvenience. The necessity of many was so great that, though the evening was raw, they chose to go on foot rather than await the dull routine of the waiting carriages; and as they retired they agreed, with one consent, to throw the blame of whatever inconvenience they might suffer on their host and hostess, who had invited so large a party before a shorter and better road made between the Well and Shaws-

It would have been so easy to repair the path by the Buck-

And this was all the thanks which Mr Mowbray received for entertainment which had cost him so much trouble and expense, had been looked forward to by the good society at the Well with such impatient expectation.

"It was an unco pleasant show," said the good-natured Blower, "only it was a pity it was sae tedioussome; and there surely an awfu' waste of gauze and muslin."

But so well had Dr Quackleben improved his numerous opportunities, that the good lady was much reconciled to affairs in general by the prospect of coughs, rheumatisms, and other maladies acquired upon the occasion, which were likely to afford that learned gentleman, in whose prosperity she much interested herself, a very profitable harvest.

Mowbray, somewhat addicted to the service of Bacchus, did not find himself freed, by the secession of so large a proportion of his company, from the service of the jolly god, although, upon the present occasion, he could well have dispensed with his orgies. Neither the song, nor the pun, nor the jest, had any power to kindle his heavy spirit, mortified as he was by the event of his party being so different from the brilliant consummation which he had anticipated. The guests, stanch boon companions, suffered not, however, their party to flag for want of the landlord's participation, but continued to drink bottle after bottle, with as little regard for Mr Mowbray's grave looks, as if they had been carousing at the Mowbray Arms instead of the Mowbray mansion-house. Midnight at length released him, when, with an unsteady step, he sought his own apartment, cursing himself and his companions, consoling his own person with all despatch to his bed, and bequeathing those of the company to many mosses and quagmires, as could be found betwixt Shaws-Castle and St Ronan's Well.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PROPOSAL.

Oh ! you would be a vestal maid, I warrant,
The bride of Heaven—Come—we may shake your purpose,—
For here I bring in hand a jolly suitor
Hath ta'en degrees in the seven sciences
That ladies love best—he is young and noble,
Handsome and valiant, gay, and rich, and liberal.

The Nun.

THE morning after a debauch is usually one of reflection, even the most customary boon companion; and, in the retrospect of the preceding day, the young Laird of St Ronan's saw nothing very consolatory, unless that the excess was not, in the present case, his own seeking, but had arisen out of the necessary duties of a landlord, or what were considered as such by his companions.

But it was not so much his dizzy recollections of the late car-

haunted him on awakening, as the inexplicability which seemed
 ous the purposes and conduct of his new ally the Earl of
 ngton.

t young nobleman had seen Miss Mowbray, had declared his
 atisfaction, had warmly and voluntarily renewed the proposal
 he had made ere she was yet known to him—and yet, far from
 g an opportunity to be introduced to her, he had even left the
 abruptly, in order to avoid the necessary intercourse which
 ere have taken place between them. His lordship's flirtation
 lady Binks had not escaped the attention of the sagacious
 ray—her ladyship also had been in a hurry to leave Shaws-
 ; and Mowbray promised to himself to discover the nature of
 nnection through Mrs Gingham, her ladyship's attendant, or
 rise; vowing deeply at the same time, that no peer in the
 should make an affectation of addressing Miss Mowbray a
 for another and more secret intrigue. But his doubts on this
 t were in great measure removed by the arrival of one of Lord
 ngton's grooms with the following letter:—

DEAR MOWBRAY,

ou would naturally be surprised at my escape from the table
 day before you returned to it, or your lovely sister had graced
 a her presence. I must confess my folly; and I may do so the
 boldly, for, as the footing on which I first opened this treaty
 t a very romantic one, you will scarce suspect me of wishing
 der it such. But I did in reality feel, during the whole of
 day, a reluctance which I cannot express, to be presented to
 dy on whose favour the happiness of my future life is to de-
 upon such a public occasion, and in the presence of so promis-
 a company. I had my mask, indeed, to wear while in the
 made, but of course that was to be laid aside at table, and con-
 tly I must have gone through the ceremony of introduction;
 t interesting moment, which I was desirous to defer till a fitter
 . I trust you will permit me to call upon you at Shaws-Castle
 morning, in the hope—the anxious hope—of being allowed to
 y duty to Miss Mowbray, and apologise for not waiting upon
 yesterday. I expect your answer with the utmost impatience,
 always yours, &c. &c. &c. “ETHERINGTON.”

is,” said St Ronan's to himself, as he folded up the letter de-
 tely, after having twice read it over, “seems all fair and above-
 ; I could not wish anything more explicit; and, moreover, it
 nto black and white, as old Mick would say, what only rested
 e on our private conversation. An especial cure for the head-
 such a billet as this in a morning.”

saying, he sat him down and wrote an answer, expressing the
 re he should have in seeing his lordship as soon as he thought
 r. He watched even the departure of the groom, and beheld
 gallop off, with the speed of one who knows that his quick re-
 was expected by an impatient master.

wbray remained for a few minutes by himself, and reflected

with delight upon the probable consequences of this match;—the advancement of his sister—and, above all, the various advantages which must necessarily accrue to himself, by so close an alliance with one whom he had good reason to think deep *in the secret*, and capable of rendering him the most material assistance in his speculations on the turf, and in the sporting world. He then sent his servant to let Miss Mowbray know that he intended to break with her.

"I suppose, John," said Clara, as her brother entered the apartment, "you are glad of a weaker cup this morning than those you were drinking last night—you were carousing till after the first cock."

"Yes," said Mowbray, "that sandbed old MacTurk, upon whose whole hogsheads make no impression, did make a bad boy of me but the day is over, and they will scarce catch me in such another scrape.—What did you think of the masks?"

"Supported as well," said Clara, "as such folk support the disguise of gentlemen and ladies during life; and that is, with a great deal of bustle, and very little propriety."

"I saw only one good mask there, and that was a Spaniard," said her brother.

"Oh, I saw him too," answered Clara; "but he wore his vizor on. An old Indian merchant, or some such thing, seemed to me a better character—the Spaniard did nothing but stalk about and twangle his guitar, for the amusement of my Lady Binks, as I think."

"He is a very clever fellow, though, that same Spaniard," rejoined Mowbray—"Can you guess who he is?"

"No, indeed; nor shall I take the trouble of trying. To set guessing about it, were as bad as seeing the whole mummery over again."

"Well," replied her brother, "you will allow one thing at least. Bottom was well acted—you cannot deny that."

"Yes," replied Clara, "that worthy really deserved to wear his ass's head to the end of the chapter—but what of him?"

"Only conceive that he should be the very same person with that handsome Spaniard," replied Mowbray.

"Then there is one fool fewer than I thought there was," replied Clara, with the greatest indifference.

Her brother bit his lip.

"Clara," he said, "I believe you are an excellent good girl, and clever to boot, but pray do not set up for wit and oddity; there is nothing in life so intolerable as pretending to think differently from other people.—That gentleman was the Earl of Etherington."

This annunciation, though made in what was meant to be an imposing tone, had no impression on Clara.

"I hope he plays the peer better than the Hidalgo," she replied carelessly.

"Yes," answered Mowbray, "he is one of the handsomest men of the time, and decidedly fashionable—you will like him much when you see him in private."

"It is of little consequence whether I do or no," answered Clara.

ou mistake the matter," said Mowbray, gravely; "it may be of
terable consequence."

Indeed!" said Clara, with a smile; "I must suppose myself,
too important a person not to make my approbation necessary
of your first-rates. He cannot pretend to pass muster at St
n's without it.—Well, I will depute my authority to Lady Binks,
he shall pass your new recruits instead of me."

his is all nonsense, Clara," said Mowbray. "Lord Etherington
here this very morning, and wishes to be made known to you.
ect you will receive him as a particular friend of mine."

With all my heart—so you will engage, after this visit, to keep
own with your other particular friends at the Well.—you know
bargain that you bring neither buck nor pointer into my par-
the one worries my cat, and the other my temper."

ou mistake me entirely, Clara—this is a very different visitor
any I have ever introduced to you—I expect to see him often
and I hope you and he will be better friends than you think of.
e more reasons for wishing this than I have now time to tell

ra remained silent for an instant, then looked at her brother
an anxious and scrutinising glance, as if she wished to penetrate
is inmost purpose.

I thought"—she said, after a minute's consideration, and with
ered and disturbed tone; "but no—I will not think that Heaven
ls me such a blow—least of all, that it should come from your
." She walked hastily to the window, and threw it open—then
it again, and returned to her seat, saying, with a constrained
"May Heaven forgive you, brother, but you frightened me
ly."

do not mean to do so, Clara," said Mowbray, who saw the
sity of soothing her; "I only alluded in joke to those chances
are never out of other girls' heads, though you never seem to
ate on them."

wish you, my dear John," said Clara, struggling again to re-
entire composure, "I wish *you* would profit by my example, and
up the science of chance also—it will not avail you."

ow d'ye know that?—I'll show you the contrary, you silly
t," answered Mowbray—"Here is a banker's bill, payable to
own order, for the cash you lent me, and something over—don't
l Mick have the fingering, but let Bindloose manage it for you
s the honestest man between two d—d knaves."

ill not you, brother, send it to the man Bindloose yourself?"

o,—no," replied Mowbray—"he might confuse it with some of
unsactions, and so you forfeit your stake."

ell, I am glad you are able to pay me, for I want to buy
bell's new work."

wish you joy of your purchase—but don't scratch me for not
about it.—I know as little of books as you of the long odds.
ome now, be serious, and tell me if you will be a good girl—
de your whims, and receive this English young nobleman like
as you are?"

"That were easy," said Clara—"but—but—Pray, ask no more than just to see him.—Say to him at once, I am a poor creature in body, in mind, in spirits, in temper, in understanding—above say that I can receive him only once."

"I shall say no such thing," said Mowbray, bluntly; "it is going to be plain with you at once—I thought of putting off this discussion—but since it must come, the sooner it is over the better.—You are to understand, Clara Mowbray, that Lord Etherington has a peculiar view in this visit, and that his view has my full sanction and approbation."

"I thought so," said Clara, in the same altered tone of voice which she had before spoken; "my mind foreboded this last of my fortunes!—But, Mowbray, you have no child before you—I neither will nor can see this nobleman."

"How!" exclaimed Mowbray, fiercely; "do you dare return so peremptory an answer?—Think better of it, for, if we differ, you will find you will have the worst of the game."

"Rely upon it," she continued, with more vehemence, "I will have him nor no man upon the footing you mention—my resolution is taken, and threats and entreaties will prove equally unavailing."

"Upon my word, madam," said Mowbray, "you have, for a moment, and retired young lady, plucked up a goodly spirit of your own. But you shall find mine equals it. If you do not agree to see your friend Lord Etherington, ay, and to receive him with the politeness due to the consideration I entertain for him, by Heaven! Clara, you will no longer regard you as my father's daughter. Think what we are giving up—the affection and protection of a brother—and what?—merely for an idle point of etiquette.—You cannot, I suppose, even in the workings of your romantic brain, imagine that the days of Clarissa Harlowe and Harriet Byron are come back again, when women were married by main force? and it is monstrous vanity in you to suppose that Lord Etherington, since he has honoured you with any thoughts at all, will not be satisfied with a proper and courteous refusal—You are no such prize, methinks, that the days of romance are to come back for you."

"I care not what days they are," said Clara—"I tell you I will see Lord Etherington, or any one else, upon such preliminaries as you have stated—I cannot—I will not—and I ought not.—Had you meant me to receive him, which can be a matter of no consequence whatever, you should have left him on the footing of an ordinary visitor—as it is, I will not see him."

"You *shall* see and hear him both," said Mowbray; "you shall find me as obstinate as you are—as willing to forget I am a brother as you to forget that you have one."

"It is time, then," replied Clara, "that this house, once our father's, should no longer hold us both. I can provide for myself, and God bless you!"

"You take it coolly, madam," said her brother, walking through the apartment with much anxiety both of look and gesture.

"I do," she answered; "for it is what I have often foreseen—my brother, I have often foreseen that you would make your sister

ect of your plots and schemes, so soon as other stakes failed you. t hour is come, and I am, as you see, prepared to meet it." And where may you propose to retire to?" said Mowbray. "I k that I, your only relation and natural guardian, have a right now that—my honour and that of my family is concerned." Your honour!" she retorted, with a keen glance at him; "your rest, I suppose you mean, is somehow connected with the place ny abode.—But keep yourself patient—the den of the rock, the f the brook, should be my choice, rather than a palace without freedom."

You are mistaken, however," said Mowbray, sternly, "if you hope njoy more freedom than I think you capable of making a good of. The law authorises, and reason, and even affection, require you should be put under restraint for your own safety and that our character. You roamed the woods a little too much in my er's time, if all stories be true."

I did—I did indeed, Mowbray," said Clara, weeping; "God pity and forgive you for upbraiding me with my state of mind—I w I cannot sometimes trust my own judgment; but is it for you emind me of this?"

Mowbray was at once softened and embarrassed.

What folly is this?" he said; "you say the most cutting things ne—are ready to fly from my house—and when I am provoked to e an angry answer, you burst into tears!"

Say you did not mean what you said, my dearest brother!" ex- ned Clara; "Oh say you did not mean it!—Do not take my liberty n me—it is all I have left, and, God knows, it is a poor comfort e sorrows I undergo. I will put a fair face on everything—will down to the Well—will wear what you please, and say what you se—but, oh! leave me the liberty of my solitude here—let me p alone in the house of my father—and do not force a broken- ted sister to lay her death at your door.—My span must be a f one, but let not your hand shake the sand-glass!—Disturb me —let me pass quietly—I do not ask this so much for my sake as your own. I would have you think of me, sometimes, Mowbray, r I am gone, and without the bitter reflections which the recol- on of harsh usage will assuredly bring with it. Pity me, were it for your own sake.—I have deserved nothing but compassion at r hand—There are but two of us on earth, why should we make a other miserable?"

he accompanied these entreaties with a flood of tears, and the t heart-bursting sobs. Mowbray knew not what to determine. the one hand, he was bound by his promise to the Earl; on the r, his sister was in no condition to receive such a visitor; nay, it most probable that, if he adopted the strong measure of com- ng her to receive him, her behaviour would probably be such as ly to break off the projected match, on the success of which he founded so many castles in the air. In this dilemma, he had n recourse to argument.

Clara," he said, "I am, as I have repeatedly said, your only rela- and guardian—if there be any real reason why you ought not to

receive, and, at least, make a civil reply to such a negotiation as the Earl of Etherington has thought fit to open, surely I ought to be trusted with it. You enjoyed far too much of that liberty which you seem to prize so highly during my father's lifetime—in the last year of it at least—have you formed any foolish attachment during that time, which now prevents you from receiving such a visit as Lord Etherington has threatened?"

"Threatened!—the expression is well chosen," said Miss Mowbray; and nothing can be more dreadful than such a threat, excepting its accomplishment."

"I am glad your spirits are reviving," replied her brother; "but that is no answer to my question."

"Is it necessary," said Clara, "that one must have actually some engagement or entanglement, to make them unwilling to be given in marriage, or even to be pestered upon such a subject?—Many young men declare they intend to die bachelors, why may not I be permitted to commence old maid at three-and-twenty?—Let me be so, like a kind brother, and there were never nephews and nieces petted and so scolded, so nursed and so cuffed by a maiden aunt, your children, when you have them, shall be by aunt Clara."

"And why not say all this to Lord Etherington?" said Mowbray. "wait until he propose such a terrible bugbear as matrimony before you refuse to receive him. Who knows, the whim that he hinted may have passed away—he was, as you say, flirting with Lady Bink and her ladyship has a good deal of address, as well as beauty."

"Heaven improve both (in an honest way), if she will but keep her lordship to herself!" said Clara.

"Well, then," continued her brother, "things standing thus, I do not think you will have much trouble with his lordship—no more perhaps, than just to give him a civil denial. After having spoken on such a subject to a man of my condition, he cannot well break without you give him an apology."

"If that is all," said Clara, "he shall, as soon as he gives me an opportunity, receive such an answer as will leave him at liberty to woo any one whatsoever of Eve's daughters, excepting Clara Mowbray. Methinks I am so eager to set the captive free, that I do not wish as much for his lordship's appearance as I feared it a little while since."

"Nay, nay, but let us go fair and softly," said her brother. "You are not to refuse him before he asks the question."

"Certainly," said Clara; "but I well know how to manage that he shall never ask the question at all. I will restore Lady Bink to her admirer, without accepting so much as a civility in ransom."

"Worse and worse, Clara," answered Mowbray; "you are to remember he is my friend and guest, and he must not be affronted in my house. Leave things to themselves.—Besides, consider an instance of Clara—had you not better take a little time for reflection in this case? The offer is a splendid one—title—fortune—and, what is more, a fortune which you will be well entitled to share largely in."

"This is beyond our implied treaty," said Clara. "I have yielded more than ever I thought I should have done, when I agreed that

Carl should be introduced to me on the footing of a common friend; and now you talk favourably of his pretensions. This is an attachment, Mowbray, and now I shall relapse into my obstinacy, and refuse to see him at all."

"So as you will," replied Mowbray, sensible that it was only by yielding to her affections that he had any chance of carrying a point against her inclination,—“Do as you will, my dear Clara; but for my own sake, wipe your eyes."

"I will behave myself," said she, trying to smile as she obeyed him, "I will behave myself, you would say, like folks of this world; but the position is lost on you, who never read either Prior or Shakespeare."

"Thank Heaven for that," said Mowbray. "I have enough to fill my brain, without carrying such a lumber of rhymes in it as the mad Lady Pen do.—Come, that is right; go to the mirror and dress yourself decent."

"A woman must be much borne down indeed by pain and suffering, when she loses all respect for her external appearance. The mad woman in Bedlam wears her garland of straw with a certain air of insensibility; and we have seen a widow whom we knew to be most severely affected by a recent deprivation, whose weeds, nevertheless, were arranged with a dolorous degree of grace, which amounted almost to coquetry. Clara Mowbray had also, negligent as she was of her appearances, her own art of the toilet, although of the most rapid and most simple character. She took off her little black hat, and, unbinding a lace of Indian gold which retained her hair, shook them in dark and glossy profusion over her very handsome form, which they overshadowed down to her slender waist; and when her brother stood looking on her with a mixture of pride, affection, and compassion, she arranged them with a large comb, and, without the assistance of any *femme d'atours*, wove them, in the space of a few minutes, into such a natural head-dress as we see in the statues of the Grecian nymphs."

"Now, let me but find my best muff," she said, "come prince and I shall be ready to receive them."

"Nonsense! your muff—who has heard of such a thing these twenty years! Muffs were out of fashion before you were born."

"No matter, John," replied his sister; "when a woman wears a bonnet, especially a determined old maid like myself, it is a sign she has intentions to scratch; and therefore the muff serves all the purposes of a white flag, and prevents the necessity of drawing on a glove, so prudentially recommended by the motto of our cousins, the *Whigs*."

"Do it as you will, then," said Mowbray; "for other than you do, you will not suffer it to be.—But how is this!—another billet?—You are in request this morning."

"Now, Heaven send his lordship may have judiciously considered the risks which he is sure to encounter on this charmed ground,

The well-known crest of this ancient race, is a cat rampant, with a motto bearing relation—"Touch not the cat, but [*i. e.* be out, or without] the glove."

and resolved to leave his adventure unattempted," said Miss Mowbray.

Her brother glanced a look of displeasure at her as he broke the seal of the letter, which was addressed to him, with the words "Honesty and secresy," written on the envelope. The contents, which greatly surprised him, we remit to the commencement of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PRIVATE INFORMATION.

——— Ope this letter,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there.——

King Lear.

THE billet which Mowbray received, and read in his sister's presence, contained these words;—

"SIR,

"CLARA MOWBRAY has few friends—none, perhaps, excepting yourself, in right of blood, and the writer of this letter, by right of fondest, truest, and most disinterested attachment, that ever man bore to woman. I am thus explicit with you, because, though it is unlikely that I should ever again see or speak to your sister, I am desirous that you should be clearly acquainted with the cause of the interest, which I must always, even to my dying breath, take in her affairs.

"The person, calling himself Lord Etherington, is, I am aware, in the neighbourhood of Shaws-Castle, with the intention of paying addresses to Miss Mowbray; and it is easy for me to foresee, according to the ordinary views of mankind, that he may place his proposals in such a light as may make them seem highly desirable. But ere you give this person the encouragement which his offers seem to deserve, please to inquire whether his fortune is certain, his rank indisputable; and be not satisfied with light evidence on either point. A man may be in possession of an estate and title which he has no better right than his own rapacity and forwardness of assumption; and supposing Mr Mowbray jealous, as he must be of the honour of his family, the alliance of such a one cannot but bring disgrace. This comes from one who will make good what he has written."

On the first perusal of a billet so extraordinary, Mowbray was inclined to set it down to the malice of some of the people at the Well, anonymous letters being no uncommon resource of the small who frequent such places of general resort, as a species of deception safely and easily executed, and well calculated to produce much chief and confusion. But upon closer consideration, he was still

opinion, and, starting suddenly from the reverie into which he fallen, asked for the messenger who had brought the letter. "was in the hall," the servant thought, and Mowbray ran to the No—the messenger was not there, but Mowbray might see him as he walked up the avenue.—He hollo'd—no answer was red—he ran after the fellow, whose appearance was that of a ryman. The man quickened his pace as he saw himself pursued and when he got out of the avenue, threw himself into one of numerous bypaths which wanderers, who strayed in quest of nuts, the sake of exercise, had made in various directions through extensive copse which surrounded the Castle, and were doubtless reason of its acquiring the name of Shaws, which signifies, in the Irish dialect, a wood of this description.

Stated by the man's obvious desire to avoid him, and naturally state in all his resolutions, Mowbray pursued for a considerable until he fairly lost breath; and the flier having been long out of he recollected at length that his engagement with the Earl of Ethington required his attendance at the Castle.

The young lord, indeed, had arrived at Shaws-Castle, so few days after Mowbray's departure, that it was wonderful they had met in the avenue. The servant to whom he applied, conceiving his master must return instantly, as he had gone out without his ushered the Earl without farther ceremony, into the breakfast-room, where Clara was seated upon one of the window-seats, so busily occupied with a book, or perhaps with her own thoughts while she held a book in her hands, that she scarce raised her head, until Lord Ethington advancing, pronounced the words, "Miss Mowbray." A start, and a loud scream, announced her deadly alarm, and these were repeated as he made one pace nearer, and in a firmer accent "Clara."

"No nearer—no nearer," she exclaimed, "if you would have me upon you and live!" Lord Ethington remained standing, ascertaining whether to advance or retreat, while with incredible rapidity she poured out her hurried entreaties that he would begone, sometimes addressing him as a real personage, sometimes, and more frequently, as a delusive phantom, the offspring of her own excited imagination. "I knew it," she muttered, "I knew what would happen, if my thoughts were forced into that fearful channel.—Speak to me, brother! speak to me while I have reason left, and tell me what stands before me is but an empty shadow! But it is a shadow—it remains before me in all the lineaments of mortal substance!"

"Clara," said the Earl, with a firm, yet softened voice, "collect and compose yourself. I am, indeed, no shadow—I am a much-armed man, come to demand rights which have been unjustly withheld from me. I am now armed with power as well as justice, and my aims shall be heard."

"Never—never!" replied Clara Mowbray; "since extremity is my portion, let extremity give me courage.—You have no rights—I know you not, and I defy you."

"I defy me not, Clara Mowbray," answered the Earl, in a tone, and

with a manner—how different from those which delighted society for now he was solemn, tragic, and almost stern, like the judge when he passes sentence upon a criminal. “Defy me not,” he repeated, “I am your Fate, and it rests with you to make me a kind or severe one.”

“Dare you speak thus?” said Clara, her eyes flashing with anger while her lips grew white, and quivered for fear—“Dare you speak thus, and remember that the same heaven is above our heads which you so solemnly vowed you would never see me more with my own consent?”

“That vow was conditional—Francis Tyrrel, as he calls himself, swore the same—hath *he* not seen you?” He fixed a piercing look on her; “He has—you dare not disown it!—And shall an oath, which to him is but a cobweb, be to me a shackle of iron?”

“Alas! it was but for a moment,” said Miss Mowbray, sinking in courage, and drooping her head as she spoke.

“Were it but the twentieth part of an instant—the least conceivable space of subdivided time—still, you *did* meet—he saw you—spoke to him. And me also you must see—me also you must hear. Or I will first claim you for my own in the face of the world; and having vindicated my rights, I will seek out and extinguish that wretched rival who has dared to interfere with them.”

“Can you speak thus?” said Clara—“can you so burst through the ties of nature?—Have you a heart?”

“I have; and it shall be moulded like wax to your slightest wish if you agree to do me justice; but not granite, nor aught else that nature has of hardest, will be more inflexible if you continue an unrelenting opposition?—Clara Mowbray, I am your Fate.”

“Not so, proud man,” said Clara, rising, “God gave not one shepherd the power to break another, save by his divine permission—fate is in the will of Him, without whose will even a sparrow falls not to the ground.—Begone—I am strong in faith of heavenly protection.”

“Do you speak thus in sincerity?” said the Earl of Etherington. “Consider first what is the prospect before you. I stand here in a doubtful or ambiguous character—I offer not the mere name of a husband—propose to you not a humble lot of obscurity and hardships with fears for the past, and doubts for the future; yet there will be time when to a suit like this you could listen favourably.—I stand high among the nobles of the country, and offer you, as my bride, your share in my honours, and in the wealth which becomes them. Your brother is my friend, and favours my suit. I will raise from the ground, and once more render illustrious, your ancient house.—Your motions shall be regulated by your wishes, even by your caprice. I will even carry my self-denial so far, that you shall, should you insist on so severe a measure, have your own residence, your own establishment, and without intrusion on my part, until the most devoted love, the most unceasing attentions, shall make way on your invariable disposition.—All this I will consent to for the future—all that has passed shall be concealed from the public.—But mine, Clara Mowbray, you must be.”

“Never—never!” she said, with increasing vehemence. “I

repeat a negative, but it shall have all the force of an oath.—Your rank is nothing to me—your fortune I scorn—my brother has right, by the law of Scotland, or of nature, to compel my inclinations.—I detest your treachery, and I scorn the advantage you propose to attain by it.—Should the law give you my hand, it would but add you that of a corpse.”

“Alas! Clara,” said the Earl, “you do but flutter in the net; but I will urge you no farther now—there is another encounter before”

He was turning away, when Clara, springing forward, caught him by the arm, and repeated, in a low and impressive voice, the commandment,—“Thou shalt do no murder!”

“Fear not any violence,” he said, softening his voice, and attempting to take her hand, “but what may flow from your own severity.—Francis is safe from me, unless you are altogether unreasonable.—Show me but what you cannot deny to any friend of your brother, the power of seeing you at times—suspend at least the impetuosity of your dislike to me, and I will, on my part, modify the current of just and otherwise uncontrollable resentment.”

Clara, extricating herself, and retreating from him, only replied, “There is a Heaven above us, and THERE shall be judged our actions towards each other! You abuse a power most treacherously obtained—you break a heart that never did you wrong—you seek an alliance with a wretch who only wishes to be wedded to her grave.—If my brother brings you hither, I cannot help it—and if your coming prevents bloody and unnatural violence, it is so far well.—But by my consent you come *not*; and were the choice mine, I would rather be struck with life-long blindness than that my eyes should again open to your person—rather that my ears were stuffed with the earth of a grave than that they should again hear your voice!”

The Earl of Etherington smiled proudly, and replied, “Even this, madam, I can hear without resentment. Anxious and careful as I am to deprive your compliance of every grace and of every kindness, I receive the permission to wait on you, as I interpret your words.”

“Do not so interpret them,” she replied; “I do but submit to your presence as an unavoidable evil. Heaven be my witness, that, were it not to prevent greater and more desperate evil, I would not even so far acquiesce.”

“Let acquiescence, then, be the word,” he said; “and so thankful I be, even for your acquiescence, Miss Mowbray, that all shall remain private, which I conceive you do not wish to be disclosed; unless absolutely compelled to it in self-defence, you may rely, violence will be resorted to by me in any quarter.—I relieve you in my presence.”

So saying, he withdrew from the apartment.

CHAPTER XXV.

EXPLANATORY.

—— By your leave, gentle wax.
SHAKESPEARE.

IN the hall of Shaws-Castle the Earl of Etherington met Mowbray returned from his fruitless chase after the bearer of the anonymous epistle before recited; and who had but just learned, on his return, that the Earl of Etherington was with his sister. There was a degree of mutual confusion when they met; for Mowbray had the contents of the anonymous letter fresh in his mind, and Lord Etherington, notwithstanding all the coolness which he endeavoured to maintain, had not gone through the scene with Clara without a loss of composure. Mowbray asked the Earl whether he had seen his sister, and invited him, at the same time, to return to the parlour; and his lordship replied, in a tone as indifferent as he could assume, that he had enjoyed the honour of the lady's company for several minutes, and would not now intrude farther upon Miss Mowbray's patience.

"You have had such a reception as was agreeable, my lord, I trust?" said Mowbray. "I hope Clara did the honours of the house with propriety during my absence?"

"Miss Mowbray seemed a little fluttered with my sudden appearance," said the Earl; "the servant showed me in rather abruptly; and, circumstanced as we were, there is always awkwardness in a first meeting, where there is no third party to act as master of ceremonies.—I suspect, from the lady's looks, that you have not quite kept my secret, my good friend. I myself, too, felt a little consciousness in approaching Miss Mowbray—but it is over now; and the ice being fairly broken, I hope to have other and more convenient opportunities to improve the advantage I have now gained in acquiring your lovely sister's personal acquaintance."

"So be it," said Mowbray; "but, as you declare for leaving Shaws-Castle just now, I must first speak a single word with your lordship, for which this place is not altogether convenient."

"I can have no objections, my dear Jack," said Etherington, following him with a thrill of conscious feeling, somewhat perhaps like that of the spider when he perceives his deceitful web is threatened with injury, and sits balanced in the centre, watching every point, and uncertain which he may be called upon first to defend. Such is one part, and not the slightest part, of the penance which nature fails to wait on those, who, abandoning the "fair play of the world," endeavour to work out their purposes by a process of deception and intrigue.

"My lord," said Mowbray, when they had entered a little apartment, in which the latter kept his guns, fishing-tackle, and other implements of sport, "you have played on the square with me;

ly, more—I am bound to allow you have given me great odds. I am therefore not entitled to hear any reports to the prejudice of your lordship's character, without instantly communicating them. Here is an anonymous letter which I have just received. Perhaps your lordship may know the hand, and thus be enabled to detect the writer."

"I do know the hand," said the Earl, as he received the note from Mowbray; "and, allow me to say, it is the only one which could have dared to frame any calumny to my prejudice. I hope, Mr Mowbray, it is impossible for you to consider this infamous charge anything but a falsehood?"

"My placing it in your lordship's hands, without farther inquiry, is a sufficient proof that I hold it such, my lord; at the same time that I cannot doubt for a moment that your lordship has it in your power to overthrow so frail a calumny by the most satisfactory evidence."

"Unquestionably I can, Mr Mowbray," said the Earl; "for, besides my being in full possession of the estate and title of my father, the late Earl of Etherington, I have my father's contract of marriage, my own certificate of baptism, and the evidence of the whole country, to establish my right. All these shall be produced with the least delay possible. You will not think it surprising that one does not travel with this sort of documents in one's post-chaise."

"Certainly not, my lord," said Mowbray; "it is sufficient they are forthcoming when called for. But, may I inquire, my lord, who the writer of this letter is, and whether he has any particular spleen to satisfy by this very impudent assertion, which is so easily capable of being disproved?"

"He is," said Etherington, "or, at least, has the reputation of being, I am sorry to say, a near—a very near relation of my own—fact, a brother by the father's side, but illegitimate.—My father was fond of him—I loved him also, for he has uncommonly fine parts, and is accounted highly accomplished. But there is a train of something irregular in his mind—a vein, in short, of madness, which breaks out in the usual manner, rendering the poor young man a dupe to vain imaginations of his own dignity and grandeur, which is perhaps the most ordinary effect of insanity, and inspiring the deepest aversion against his nearest relatives, and against myself in particular. He is a man extremely plausible, both in speech and manners; so much so, that many of my friends think there is more reason than insanity in the irregularities which he commits; but I say, I hope, be forgiven, if I have formed a milder judgment of one supposed to be my father's son. Indeed, I cannot help being sorry for poor Frank, who might have made a very distinguished figure in the world."

"May I ask the gentleman's name, my lord?" said Mowbray.

"My father's indulgence gave him our family name of Tyrrel, with his own Christian name Francis; but his proper name, to which alone he has a right, is Martigny."

"Francis Tyrrel!" exclaimed Mowbray; "why, that is the name of the very person who made some disturbance at the Well just before

your lordship arrived.—You may have seen an advertisement—a set of placard.”

“I have, Mr Mowbray,” said the Earl. “Spare me on that subject, if you please—it has formed a strong reason why I did not mention my connection with this unhappy man before; but it is not an unusual thing for persons, whose imaginations are excited, to rush into causeless quarrels, and then to make discreditable retreats from them.”

“Or,” said Mr Mowbray, “he may have, after all, been prevented from reaching the place of rendezvous—it was that very day which your lordship, I think, received your wound; and, if I mistake not, you hit the man from whom you got the hurt.”

“Mowbray,” said Lord Etherington, lowering his voice, and taking him by the arm, “it is true that I did so—and truly glad am I to observe, that, whatever might have been the consequences of such an accident, they cannot have been serious.—It struck me afterwards that the man, by whom I was so strangely assaulted, had some resemblance to the unfortunate Tyrrel—but I had not seen him for years.—At any rate, he cannot have been much hurt, since he is now able to resume his intrigues to the prejudice of my character.”

“Your lordship views the thing with a firm eye,” said Mowbray, “firmer than I think most people would be able to command, who had so narrow a chance of a scrape so uncomfortable.”

“Why, I am, in the first place, by no means sure that the risk was justified,” said the Earl of Etherington; “for, as I have often told you, I had but a very transient glimpse of the ruffian; and, in the second place, I *am* sure that no permanent bad consequences have ensued. I am too old a fox-hunter to be afraid of a leap after it is cleared up. They tell of the fellow who fainted in the morning at the sight of a precipice he had clambered over when he was drunk on the night before. The man who wrote that letter,” touching it with his finger, “is alive, and able to threaten me; and if he did come to any harm from my hand, it was in the act of attempting my life, of which I shall carry the mark to my grave.”

“Nay, I am far from blaming your lordship,” said Mowbray, “for what you did in self-defence, but the circumstance might have turned out very unpleasant.—May I ask what you intend to do with this unfortunate gentleman, who is in all probability in the neighbourhood?”

“I must first discover the place of his retreat,” said Lord Etherington, “and then consider what is to be done, both for his safety, as a poor fellow, and my own. It is probable, too, that he may find sharpers to prey upon what fortune he still possesses, which, I assure you, is sufficient to attract a set of folk who may ruin while they flatter him.—May I beg that you, too, will be on the outlook, and let me know if you hear or see more of him?”

“I shall, most certainly, my lord,” answered Mowbray; “but the only one of his haunts which I know, is the old Cleikum Inn, where he chose to take up his residence. He has now left it, but perhaps the old crab-fish of a landlady may know something of him.”

“I will not fail to inquire,” said Lord Etherington; and, with these words, he took a kind farewell of Mowbray, mounted his horse, and rode up the avenue.

"A cool fellow," said Mowbray, as he looked after him, "a d—d cool fellow, this brother-in-law of mine, that is to be—takes a shot at a father's son with as little remorse as at a blackcock—what would he do with me, were we to quarrel?—Well, I can snuff a candle and smoke out the ace of hearts; and so, should things go wrong, he has Jack Raw to deal with, but Jack Mowbray."

Meanwhile the Earl of Etherington hastened home to his own apartments at the Hotel; and, not entirely pleased with the events of the day, commenced a letter to his correspondent, agent, and confidant, Captain Jekyl, which we have fortunately the means of presenting to our readers.—

"FRIEND HARRY,

THEY say a falling house is best known by the rats leaving it—a falling state, by the desertion of confederates and allies—and a falling man, by the desertion of his friends. If this be true augury, your letter may be considered as ominous of my breaking down. Methinks, you have gone far enough, and shared deep enough with me, to have some confidence in my *savoir faire*—some little faith both in my means and management.—What cross-grained fiend has at once injured you with what I suppose you wish me to call politic doubts and scruples of conscience, but which I can only regard as symptoms of fear and disaffection? You can have no idea of 'duels betwixt relations so nearly connected'—and 'the affair seems very delicate and intricate'—and again, 'the matter has never been fully explained to you'—and, moreover, 'if you are expected to take an active part in the business, it must be when you are honoured with my full and unreserved confidence, otherwise how could you be of the use to me which I might require?' Such are your expressions.

Now, as to scruples of conscience about near relations, and so forth, all that has blown by without much mischief, and certainly is not likely to occur again—besides, did you never hear of friends quarrelling before? And are they not to exercise the usual privileges of gentlemen when they do? Moreover, how am I to know that this plucky fellow is actually related to me?—They say it is a wise child that knows its own father; and I cannot be expected wise enough to know to what certainty my father's son—So much for relationship.—Then, as to full and unreserved confidence—why, Harry, this is just as if I were to ask you to look at a watch, and tell what it was o'clock, and you were to reply, that truly you could not inform me, because you had not examined the springs, the counter-balances, the wheels, and the whole internal machinery of the little timepiece.—But the upshot of the whole is this,—Harry Jekyl, who is as sharp a fellow as any of our set, thinks he has his friend Lord Etherington at a deadlock, and that he knows already so much of the said noble lord's history as to urge his lordship to tell him the whole. And perhaps he not unreasonably concludes, that the custody of a whole secret is more creditable, and probably more lucrative, than that of a half one; and in short, he is resolved to make the most of the cards in his hand. Another, mine honest Harry, would take the trouble to relate to your mind past times and circumstances, and conclude with

expressing a humble opinion, that if Harry Jekyl were asked to do any service for the noble lord aforesaid, Harry had got reward in his pocket aforehand. But I do not argue thus, because I would rather be leagued with a friend who assists me with a view to future profit, than from respect to benefits already received. The first lies like the fox's scent when on his last legs, increasing every moment; the other is a back-scent, growing colder the longer you follow it, until at last it becomes impossible to puzzle it out. I therefore submit to the circumstances, and tell you the whole story, though somewhat tedious, in hopes that I can conclude with success as you will open upon breast high.

"Thus then it was.—Francis, fifth Earl of Etherington, and much-honoured father, was what is called a very eccentric man—that is, he was neither a wise man nor a fool—had too much sense to walk into a well, and yet in some of the furious fits which he was visited with, I have seen him quite mad enough to throw any one else out of the way. —Men said there was a lurking insanity—but it is an ill bird that hides itself, and I will say no more about it. This shatter-brained peer was, in other respects, a handsome accomplished man, with an expression somewhat haughty, yet singularly pleasing when he chose it—and in short, who might push his fortune with the fair sex.

"Lord Etherington, such as I have described him, being upon his travels in France, formed an attachment of the heart—ay, and had even pretended, of the hand also, with a certain beautiful orphan, Marie de Martigny. Of this union is said to have sprung (for I have determined not to be certain on that point) that most incommensurable person, Francis Tyrrel, as he calls himself, but as I would rather call him, Francis Martigny; the latter suiting my views, as perhaps the former name agrees better with his pretensions. Now, I am a good a son to subscribe to the alleged regularity of the marriage between my right honourable and very good lord father, because my said right honourable and very good lord did, on his return to England, became wedded, in the face of the church, to my affectionate and well-endowed mother, Ann Bulmer of Bulmer, from which happy union sprung I, Francis Valentine Bulmer Tyrrel, lawful inheritor of my father and mother's joint estates, as I was proud possessor of their ancient names. But the noble and wealthy pair, though blessed with such a pledge of love as myself, were mighty ill together, and the rather, when my right honourable father was sending for this other Sosia, this unlucky Francis Tyrrel, who came from France, insisted, in the face of propriety, that he should live in his house, and share, in all respects, in the opportunities of education by which the real Sosia, Francis Valentine Bulmer Tyrrel, then commonly called Lord Oakendale, hath profited in such a common degree.

"Various were the matrimonial quarrels which arose between the honoured lord and lady, in consequence of this unseemly conjunction of the legitimate and illegitimate; and to these, we, the subjects of the dispute, were sometimes very properly, as well as decorously, made the witnesses. On one occasion, my right honourable mother, who was a free-spoken lady, found the language of her own

ite inadequate to express the strength of her generous feelings, and borrowing from the vulgar two emphatic words, applied them to Marie de Martigny and her son Francis Tyrrel. Never did Earl at ever wore coronet fly into a pitch of more uncontrollable rage than did my right honourable father; and, in the ardour of his reply, adopted my mother's phraseology, to inform her that, if there *was* a whore and bastard connected with his house, it was herself and her son.

I was even then a sharp little fellow, and was incredibly struck by the communication, which, in an hour of uncontrollable irritation, I escaped my right honourable father. It is true, he instantly gathered himself up again; and, he perhaps recollecting such a word as *bigamy*, and my mother, on her side, considering the consequences of such a thing as a descent from the Countess of Etherington into the Bulmer, neither wife, maid, nor widow, there was an apparent reconciliation between them, which lasted for some time. But the speech remained deeply imprinted on my remembrance; the more so that once, when I was exerting over my friend Francis Tyrrel, the authority of a legitimate brother, and Lord Oakendale, old Cecil, my father's confidential valet, was so much scandalised, as to intimate a possibility that we might one day change conditions. These two accidental communications seemed to me a key to certain long lectures, with which my father used to regale us boys, but me in particular, upon the extreme mutability of human affairs,—the disappointment of the best grounded hopes and expectations,—and the necessity of being so accomplished in all useful branches of knowledge, as might, in case of accidents, supply any defalcation in our rank and fortune;—as if any art or science could make amends for the loss of an Earldom, and twelve thousand a-year! All this prosing seemed to my anxious mind designed to prepare me for some unfortunate change; and when I was old enough to make such private inquiries as lay in my power, I became still more persuaded that my right honourable father nourished some thoughts of making an honest man of Marie de Martigny, and a legitimate elder brother of Francis, after his death at least, if not during his life. I was therefore convinced of this, when a little affair, which I chanced to have with the daughter of my Tu——, drew down my father's wrath upon me in great abundance, and occasioned my being banished to Scotland, along with my brother, under a very poor allowance, without introductions, except to one steady, or call it rusty, old Professor, and with the charge that I should not assume the title of Lord Oakendale, but content myself with my maternal grandfather's name of Valentine Bulmer, that of Francis Tyrrel being pre-occupied.

Upon this occasion, notwithstanding the fear which I entertained of my father's passionate temper, I did venture to say that, since I was to resign my title, I thought I had a right to keep my family name, and that my brother might take his mother's. I wish you had seen the look of rage with which my father regarded me, when I gave him this spirited hint. 'Thou art'—he said, and paused as if to find out the bitterest epithet to supply the blank—'thou art thy mother's child, and her perfect picture'—(this seemed the severest

reproach that occurred to him).—‘Bear her name then, and bear with patience and in secrecy; or, I here give you my word, you shall never bear another the whole days of your life.’ This sealed mouth with a witness; and then, in allusion to my flirtation with daughter of my Tu—aforesaid, he enlarged on the folly and iniquity of private marriages, warned me that in the country I was going to the matrimonial noose often lies hid under flowers, and that find it twined round their neck when they least expect such a cravat; assured me that he had very particular views for settling Francis and me in life, and he would forgive neither of us who should by any such rash entanglement, render them unavailing.

“This last minatory admonition was the more tolerable that rival had his share of it; and so we were bundled off to Scotland coupled up like two pointers in a dog-cart, and—I can speak for at least—with much the same uncordial feeling towards each other. I often, indeed, detected Francis looking at me with a singular expression, as of pity and anxiety, and once or twice he seemed poised to enter on something respecting the situation in which stood towards each other; but I felt no desire to encourage his confidence. Meantime, as we were called, by our father’s directions, brothers, but cousins, so we came to bear towards each other habits of companionship, though scarcely of friendship. What Francis thought, I know not; for my part, I must confess, though I lay by on the watch for some opportunity when I might mend my own situation with my father, though at the prejudice of my relations. And Fortune, while she seemed to prevent such an opportunity involved us both in one of the strangest and most entangled meshes that her capricious divinityship ever wove, and out of which I have even now struggling, by sleight or force, to extricate myself. I can hardly help wondering, even yet, at the odd conjunction which produced such an intricacy of complicated incidents.

“My father was a great sportsman, and Francis and I had inherited his taste for field-sports, but I in a keener and more exclusive degree. Edinburgh, which is a tolerable residence in winter and spring, becomes disagreeable in summer, and in autumn is the melancholy *sejour* that ever poor mortals were condemned to. When the public places are open, no inhabitant of any consideration remains in the town; those who cannot get away hide themselves in obscure corners, as if ashamed to be seen in the streets. The gentry fly to their country-houses—the citizens to their sea-bathing quarters—lawyers to their circuits—the writers to visit their country clients—and all the world to the moors to shoot grouse. We, who feel the indignity of remaining in town, during this deserted season, obtain with some difficulty, permission from the Earl to betake ourselves to any obscure corner, and shoot grouse, if we could get leave to do so on our general character of English students at the University of Edinburgh, without quoting anything more.

“The first year of our banishment we went to the neighbourhood of the Highlands; but finding our sport interrupted by gamekeepers and their gillies, on the second occasion we established ourselves in this little village of St Ronan’s, where there were then no Spa no

e people, no card tables, no quizzes, excepting the old quiz of a lady with whom we lodged. We found the place much to our nd; the old landlady had interest with some old fellow, agent of a n-residing nobleman, who gave us permission to sport over his vors, of which I availed myself keenly, and Francis with more oderation. He was, indeed, of a grave, musing sort of a habit, and en preferred solitary walks in the wild and beautiful scenery th which the village is surrounded, to the use of the gun. He was ached to fishing, moreover, that dullest of human amusements, and s also tended to keep us considerably apart. This gave me rather asure than concern;—not that I hated Francis at that time; nay, t that I greatly disliked his society; but merely because it was pleasant to be always with one, whose fortunes I looked upon as nding in direct opposition to my own. I also rather despised the ilference about sport, which indeed seemed to grow upon him; lt my gentleman had better taste than I was aware of. If he sought grouse on the hill, he had flushed a pheasant in the wood.

Clara Mowbray, daughter of the Lord of the more picturesque n wealthy domain of St Ronan's, was at that time scarce sixteen yrs old, and as wild and beautiful a woodland nymph as the imagi- n can fancy—simple as a child in all that concerned the world d its ways, acute as a needle in every point of knowledge which e had found an opportunity of becoming acquainted with; fearing m from no one, and with a lively and natural strain of wit which ough amusement and gaiety wherever she came. Her motions re under no restraint, save that of her own inclination; for her fier, though a cross, peevish old man, was confined to his chair h the gout, and her only companion, a girl somewhat of inferior ete, bred up in the utmost deference to Miss Mowbray's fancies, sved for company indeed in her strolls through the wild country on fit and on horseback, but never thought of interfering with her will a pleasure.

The extreme loneliness of the country (at that time), and the iplicity of its inhabitants, seemed to render these excursions pfectly safe. Francis, happy dog, became the companion of the dsels on such occasions through the following accident. Miss Mowbray had dressed herself and her companion like country wenches, w a view to surprise the family of one of their better sort of faners. They had accomplished their purpose greatly to their satisfaction, and were hieing home after sunset, when they were en- countered by a country fellow—a sort of Harry Jekyl in his way— w, being equipped with a glass or two of whisky, saw not the nality of blood through her disguise, and accosted the daughter of a ndred sires as he would have done a ewe-milker. Miss Mow- bray remonstrated—her companion screamed—up came cousin Francis with a fowling-piece on his shoulder, and soon put the syan to flight.

This was the beginning of an acquaintance which had gone great leths before I found it out. The fair Clara, it seems, found it ear to roam in the woods with an escort than alone, and my stious and sentimental relative was almost her constant com-

panion. At their age it was likely that some time might pass before they came to understand each other; but full confidence and intimacy was established between them ere I heard of their amour.

"And here, Harry, I must pause till next morning, and send you the conclusion under a separate cover. The rap which I had on the elbow the other day is still tingling at the end of my fingers, and you must not be critical with my manuscript."

CHAPTER XXVI.

LETTER CONTINUED.

——— Must I then ravel out
My weaved-up follies?———

SHAKESPEARE.

"I RESUME my pen, Harry, to mention, without attempting to describe my surprise, that Francis, compelled by circumstances, made me the confidant of his love-intrigue. My grave cousin, in love, and very much in the mind of approaching the perilous venture of clandestine marriage—he who used every now and then, not merely to the improvement of our cordial regard, to lecture me upon duty, just upon the point of slipping the bridle himself! I could not for my life tell whether surprise, or a feeling of mischievous satisfaction, was predominant. I tried to talk to him as he used to talk to me; but I had not the gift of persuasion, or he the power of understanding the words of wisdom. He insisted our situation was different—that his unhappy birth, as he termed it, freed him at least from dependence on his father's absolute will—that he had, by becoming from some relative of his mother, a moderate competence, which Miss Mowbray had consented to share with him; in fine, that he desired not my counsel but my assistance. A moment's consideration convinced me that I should be unkind, not to him only, but to myself, unless I gave him all the backing I could in this his dutiful scheme. I recollected our right honourable father's denunciations against Scottish marriages, and secret marriages of all kinds—denunciations perhaps not the less vehement, that he might have some secret prick of conscience on the subject himself. I remembered that my grave brother had always been a favourite, and that I got not—how was it possible I could forget?—those ominous expressions which intimated a possibility of the hereditary estate and honours being transferred to the elder, instead of the younger son. Now, it required no conjuror to foresee, that should Francis commit this inexpressible crime of secretly allying himself with a Scottish beauty, our sire would lose all wish to accomplish such a transaction in his favour; and while my brother's merits were altogether obscured by such an unpardonable act of disobedience, my own longer overshadowed by prejudice or partiality, would shine for

their natural brilliancy. These considerations, which flashed on me with the rapidity of lightning, induced me to consent to hold Frank's back-hand, during the perilous game he proposed to play. I had only to take care that my own share in the matter should not be so prominent as to attract my father's attention; and this I was well afraid of, for his wrath was usually of that vehement and formidable character, which, like lightning, is attracted to one single point, and is bursting with violence as undivided as it was uncontrollable.

I soon found the lovers needed my assistance more than I could have supposed; for they were absolute novices in any sort of intrigue, which to me seemed as easy and natural as lying. Francis had been detected by some tattling spy in his walks with Clara, and the news had been carried to old Mowbray, who was greatly incensed at his daughter, though little knowing that her crime was greater than admitting an unknown English student to form a personal acquaintance with her. He prohibited farther intercourse—resolved, in justice-of-peace phrase, to rid the country of us; and, prudently making all mention of his daughter's delinquency, commenced an action against Francis, under pretext of punishing him as an encroacher upon his game, but in reality to scare him from the neighbourhood. His person was particularly described to all the keepers and satellites about Shaws-Castle, and any personal intercourse between him and Clara became impossible, except under the most desperate risks. Nay, such was their alarm, that Master Francis thought prudent, for Miss Mowbray's sake, to withdraw as far as a town called Marchthorn, and there to conceal himself, maintaining his intercourse with Clara only by letter.

It was then I became the sheet-anchor of the hope of the lovers; it was then my early dexterity and powers of contrivance were first put to the test; and it would be too long to tell you in how many species, and by how many contrivances, I acted as agent, letter-crier, and go-between, to maintain the intercourse of these separated turtles. I have had a good deal of trouble in that way on my own account, but never half so much as I took on account of this bee of lovers. I scaled walls and swam rivers, set bloodhounds, quarterstaves, and blunderbusses at defiance; and, excepting the distant prospect of self-interest which I have hinted at, I was neither to have honour nor reward for my pains. I will own to you, that Clara Mowbray was so very beautiful—so absolutely confiding in her lover's friend—and thrown into such close intercourse with me, that there were times when I thought that, in conscience, she ought not to have scrupled to have contributed a mite to reward the faithful labourer. But then she looked like purity itself; and I was such a novice at that time of day, that I did not know how it might have been possible for me to retreat if I had made too bold an advance—any, in short, I thought it best to content myself with assisting true love to run smooth, in the hope that its course would assure me, in the long-run, an Earl's title and an Earl's fortune.

Nothing was, therefore, ventured on my part which could raise suspicion, and, as the confidential friend of the lovers, I prepared everything for their secret marriage. The pastor of the parish

agreed to perform the ceremony, prevailed upon by an argument which I used to him, and which Clara, had she guessed it, would have little thanked me for. I led the honest man to believe that in declining to do his office, he might prevent a too successful lover from doing justice to a betrayed maiden; and the parson, who, I found, had a spice of romance in his disposition, resolved, under such pressing circumstances, to do them the kind office of binding them together, although the consequence might be a charge of irregularity against himself. Old Mowbray was much confined to his room, his daughter less watched since Frank had removed from the neighbourhood—the brother (which, by-the-by, I should have said before, not then in the country—and it was settled that the lovers should meet at the Old Kirk of St Ronan's, when the twilight became deep, and go off in a chaise for England so soon as the ceremony was performed.

"When all this was arranged save the actual appointment of the day, you cannot conceive the happiness and the gratitude of my sister and brother. He looked upon himself as approaching to the seven heavens, instead of losing his chance of a good fortune, and encumbering himself at nineteen with a wife, and all the probabilities of narrow circumstances and an increasing family. Though so much younger myself, I could not help wondering at his extreme want of knowledge of the world, and feeling ashamed that I had ever allowed him to take the airs of a tutor with me; and this conscious superiority supported me against the thrill of jealousy which always seized me when I thought of his carrying off the beautiful prize, which, without my address, he could never have made his own.—But in this important crisis, I had a letter from my father, which, by some accident, had long lain at our lodgings in Edinburgh—had they visited our former quarters in the Highlands—again returned to Edinburgh—and at length reached me at Marchthorn in a most critical time.

"It was in reply to a letter of mine, in which, among other matters, such as good boys send to their papas, descriptions of the country, accounts of studies, exercises, and so forth, I had, to fill up the sheet to a dutiful length, thrown in something about the family of St Ronan's, in the neighbourhood of which I was writing. I had no idea what an effect the name would produce on the mind of my respectable father, but his letter sufficiently expressed it. He charged me to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr Mowbray as fast and as intimately as possible; and, if need were, to inform him candidly of our real character and situation in life. Wisely considering, at the same time, that his filial admonition might be neglected if not backed by some sufficient motive, his lordship frankly let me into the secret of my grand-uncle by the mother's side, Mr S. Mowbray of Newwood's last will and testament, by which I saw, to my astonishment and alarm, that a large and fair estate was bequeathed to the eldest son and heir of the Earl of Etherington, on condition of his forming a matrimonial alliance with a lady of the house of Mowbray of St Ronan's.—Mercy of Heaven! how I stared! Here had I been making every preparation for wedding Francis to the very girl whose

ould insure to myself wealth and independence!—And even the first as, though great, was not likely to be the last. My father spoke of the marriage like a land-surveyor, but of the estate of Nettlewood like an impassioned lover. He seemed to dote on every acre of it, and felt on its contiguity to his own domains as a circumstance which rendered the union of the estates not desirable merely, but constituted an arrangement pointed out by the hand of nature. And although observed, that, on account of the youth of the parties, a treaty of marriage could not be immediately undertaken, it was yet clear he would approve at heart of any bold stroke which would abolish the interval of time that might otherwise intervene, ere Oakendale and Nettlewood became one property.

Here, then, were shipwrecked my fair hopes. It was clear as sunshine, that a private marriage, unpardonable in the abstract, would become venial, nay, highly laudable, in my father's eyes, if it united their heir with Clara Mowbray; and if he really had, as my fears suggested, the means of establishing legitimacy on my brother's part, nothing was so likely to tempt him to use them as the certainty that, in this doing so, Nettlewood and Oakendale would be united into one. The very catastrophe which I had prepared, as sure to exclude my rival from his father's favour, was thus likely, unless it could be prevented, to become a strong motive and argument for the Earl placing his rights above mine.

I shut myself up in my bedroom, locked the door, read and again read my father's letter, and instead of giving way to idle passion (beware of that, Harry, even in the most desperate circumstances), I considered, with keen investigation, whether some remedy could yet be found.—To break off the match for the time would have been easy—a little private information to Mr Mowbray would have done that with a vengeance—but then the treaty might be renewed under my father's auspices;—at all events, the share which I had taken in the intrigue between Clara and my brother, rendered it almost impossible for me to become a suitor in my own person.— Amid these perplexities, it suddenly occurred to my adventurous heart and contriving brain—what if I should personate the bridegroom?—This strange thought, you will recollect, occurred to a very youthful brain—it was banished—it returned—returned again and again—was viewed under every different shape—became familiar—was adopted.—It was easy to fix the appointment with Clara and the clergyman, for I managed the whole correspondence—the resemblance between Francis and me in stature and in proportion—the disguise which we were to assume—the darkness of the church—the hurry of the moment—might, I trusted, prevent Clara from recognising me. To the minister I had only to say, that, though I had hitherto talked of a friend, I myself was the happy man. My first name was Francis as well as his; and I had found Clara so gentle, so yielding, so flatteringly cordial in her intercourse with me, that, once within my power, and prevented from receding by shame and a thousand contradictory feelings, I had, with the vanity of an *amoureux* *déceuse*, the confidence to believe I could reconcile the fair lady to the exchange.

"There certainly never came such a thought into a madcap brain; and, what is more extraordinary—but that you already know—it was so far successful, that the marriage ceremony was performed between us in the presence of a servant of mine, her accommodating companion, and the priest. We got into the carriage, and were a mile from the church, when my unlucky or lucky brother stopped the chaise by force—through what means he had obtained knowledge of my little trick, I never have been able to learn. Solmes has been faithful to me in too many instances that I should suspect him in the important crisis. I jumped out of the carriage, pitched fraternity the devil, and, betwixt desperation and something very like sham, began to cut away with a *couteau de chasse*, which I had provided in case of necessity.—All was in vain—I was hustled down under the wheel of the carriage, and, the horses taking fright, it went over my body.

"Here ends my narrative; for I neither heard nor saw more until I found myself stretched on a sick-bed many miles from the scene of action, and Solmes engaged in attending on me. In answer to my passionate inquiries, he briefly informed me, that Master Frank had sent back the young lady to her own dwelling, and that she appeared to be extremely ill in consequence of the alarm she had sustained. My own health, he assured me, was considered as very precarious, and added, that Tyrrel, who was in the same house, was in the utmost perturbation on my account. The very mention of his name brought on a crisis in which I brought up much blood, and it is singular that the physician who attended me—a gentleman, with a wig—considered that this was of service to me. I know it frightened me heartily, and prepared me for the visit from Master Frank, which I endured with a tameness he would not have experienced had the usual current of blood flowed in his veins. But sickness and the lancet make one very tolerant of sermonising.—At last, in consideration of being relieved from the accursed presence, and the sound of his infernally calm voice, I slowly and reluctantly acquiesced in an arrangement, by which he proposed that we should for ever bid adieu to each other, and to Clara Mowbray. I would have hesitated at this last stipulation. 'She was,' I said, 'my wife, and I was entitled to claim her as such.'

"This drew down a shower of most moral reproaches, and an assurance that Clara disowned and detested my alliance, and that where there had been an essential error in the person, the mere ceremony could never be accounted binding by the law of any Christian country. I wonder this had not occurred to me; but my ideas of marriage were much founded on plays and novels, where such details as I had practised are often resorted to for winding up the plot without any hint of their illegality; besides, I had confided, as I mentioned before, a little too rashly perhaps, in my own powers of persuading so young a bride as Clara to be contented with one hand-fellow instead of another.

"Solmes took up the argument, when Francis released me, leaving the room. He spoke of my father's resentment, should

terprise reach his ears—of the revenge of Mowbray of St Ronan's, whose nature was both haughty and rugged—of risk from the laws of the country, and God knows what bugbears besides, which, at a more advanced age, I would have laughed at. In a word, I sealed my capitulation, vowed perpetual absence, and banished myself, as they say in this country, forth of Scotland.

And here, Harry, observe and respect my genius. Every circumstance was against me in this negotiation. I had been the aggressor in the war; I was wounded, and, it might be said, a prisoner in my antagonist's hands; yet I could so far avail myself of Monsieur Martigny's greater eagerness for peace, that I clogged the treaty with a condition highly advantageous to myself, and equally unfavourable to him.—Said Mr Francis Martigny was to take upon himself the burden of my right honourable father's displeasure; and our separation, which was certain to give immense offence, was to be represented as my work, not as mine. I insisted, tender-hearted, dutiful soul as I was, that I would consent to no measure which was to bring down my father's displeasure. This was a *sine qua non* in our negotiation.

'Voilà ce que c'est d'avoir des talens!'

Monsieur Francis would, I suppose, have taken the world on his shoulders, to have placed an eternal separation betwixt his turtle-dove and the falcon who had made so bold a pounce at her.—What he wrote to my father, I know not; as for myself, in all duty, I represented the bad state of my health from an accident, and that my father and companion having been suddenly called from me by some cause which he had not explained, I had thought it necessary to bet to London for the best advice, and only waited his lordship's permission to return to the paternal mansion. This I soon received, and found, as I expected, that he was in towering wrath against my father for his disobedience; and after some time I even had reason to think (as how could it be otherwise, Harry?) that, on becoming better acquainted with the merits and amiable manners of his apparent heir, he lost any desire which he might formerly have entertained of accomplishing any change in my circumstances in relation to the world. Perhaps the old peer turned a little ashamed of his own conduct, and dared not aver to the congregation of the righteous (for he became saintly in his latter days) the very pretty frolics which he seems to have been guilty of in his youth. Perhaps, also, the death of my right honourable mother operated in my favour, since, while she lived, my chance was the worse—there is no saying what a man will do to spite his wife.—Enough, he died—slept with his right honourable fathers, and I became, without opposition, Right Honourable in his stead.

Now I have borne my new honours, thou, Harry, and our merry set know full well. Newmarket and Tattersal's may tell the rest.—I thank I have been as lucky as most men where luck is most prized, and so I shall say no more on that subject.

And now, Harry, I will suppose thee in a moralising mood; that thou wilt fancy the dice have run wrong—or your double-barrel has run fire—or a certain lady has looked cross—or any such.

weighty cause of gravity has occurred, and you give me the benefit of your seriousness.—‘My dear Etherington,’ say you pithily, ‘you are a precious fool!—Here you are, stirring up a business rather scandalous in itself, and fraught with mischief to all concerned—business which might sleep for ever, if you let it alone, but which is sure, like a sea-coal fire, to burst into a flame if you go on poking it.’ I would like to ask your lordship only two questions,—say you, with your usual graceful attitude of adjusting your perpendicular shirt collar, and passing your hand over the knot of your cravat, which deserves a peculiar place in the *Tietania*—‘only two questions; the first is, Whether you do not repent the past, and whether you do not fear the future?’ Very comprehensive queries, these of yours, Harry, for they respect both the time past and the time to come—on the whole life, in short. However, I shall endeavour to answer them as well as I may.

“Repent the past, said you?—Yes, Harry, I think I do repent the past—that is, not quite in the parson’s style of repentance, which resembles yours when you have a headache, but as I would repent my hand at cards which I had played on false principles. I should have begun with the young lady—availed myself in a very different manner of Monsieur Martigny’s absence, and my own intimacy with her, and thus superseded him, if possible, in the damsel’s affections. The scheme I adopted, though there was, I think, both boldness and dexterity in it, was that of a novice of premature genius, who cannot calculate chances. So much for repentance.—Do I not fear the future?—Harry, I will not cut your throat for supposing you to have put the question, but calmly assure you that I never feared anything in my life. I was born without the sensation, I believe; at least, it is perfectly unknown to me. When I felt that cursed wheel pass across my breast, when I felt the pistol-ball benumb my arm, I felt no more agitation than at the bounce of a champagne cork. But I would not have you think that I am fool enough to risk plague, trouble, and danger (all of which, besides considerable expense, I am now prepared to encounter) without some adequate motive,—and here it is.

“From various quarters, hints, rumours, and surmises have reached me, that an attack will be made on my rank and status in society, which can only be in behalf of this fellow Martigny (for I will not call him by his stolen name of Tyrrel). Now, this I hold to be a breach of the paction betwixt us, by which—that is, by that which I am determined to esteem its true meaning and purport—he was to leave my right honourable father and me to settle our own matters without his interference, which amounted to a virtual resignation of his rights, if the scoundrel ever had any. Can he expect I am to resign my wife, and, what is a better thing, old Scrogie Mowbray’s estate of Nettlewood, to gratify the humour of a fellow who sets up claim to my title and whole property? No, by —! If he assails me on a point so important, I will retaliate upon him in one where he will feel as keenly; and that he may depend upon.—And now, methinks, you come upon me with a second edition of your grave reasons and strances about family feuds, unnatural rencontres, offence to all the feelings of all the world, et cætera, et cætera, which you might see

most delectably with the old stave about brethren dwelling together in unity. I will not stop to inquire whether all these delicate apprehensions are on account of the Earl of Etherington, his safety, and reputation; or whether my friend Harry Jekyl be not considering how far his own interference with such a naughty business will be well taken at headquarters; and so, without pausing on that question, I shall barely and briefly say, that you cannot be more sensible than I am of the madness of bringing matters to such an extremity—I have no such intention, I assure you, and it is with no such purpose that I invite you here.—Were I to challenge Martigny, he would refuse me the meeting; and all less ceremonious ways of arranging such an affair are quite old-fashioned.

It is true, at our first meeting I was betrayed into the scrape I told you of—just as you may have shot (or shot *at*, for I think you are no down-right hitter) a hen-pheasant, when flushed within distance, by a sort of instinctive movement, without reflecting on the enormity you were about to commit. The truth is, there is an ignis fatuus influence, which seems to govern our house—it poured its wild-fire through my father's veins—it has descended to me in full vigour, and every now and then its impulse is irresistible. There was my enemy, and here were my pistols, was all I had time to think about that matter. But I will be on my guard in future, the more surely I cannot receive any provocation from him; on the contrary, if I must confess the truth, though I was willing to gloss it a little in my first account of the matter (like the Gazette, when recording a defeat), I am certain he would never voluntarily have fired at me, and that his pistol went off as he fell. You know me well enough to be assured that I will never be again in the scrape of attacking an unreluctant antagonist, were he ten times my brother.

Then, as to this long tirade about hating my brother—Harry, I do not hate him more than the first-born of Egypt are in general hated by those whom they exclude from entailed estates, and so forth—not one landed man in twenty of us that is not hated by his younger brothers, to the extent of wishing him quiet in his grave, as an abominable stumblingblock in their path of life; and so far only do I hate Monsieur Martigny. But for the rest, I rather like him as otherwise, and, would he but die, would give my frank consent to his being canonised; and while he lives, I am not desirous that he should be exposed to any temptation from rank and riches, those main obstacles to the self-denying course of life, by which the odour of sanctity is attained.

Here again you break in with your impertinent queries—If I have no purpose of quarrelling personally with Martigny, why do I come into collision with him at all?—why not abide by the treaty of Melthorn, and remain in England, without again approaching St Ronan's, or claiming my maiden bride?

Have I not told you, I want him to cease all threatened attempts upon my fortune and dignity? Have I not told you, that I want to claim my wife, Clara Mowbray, and my estate of Nettlewood, fairly, by marrying her?—And, to let you into the whole secret, though Clara is a very pretty woman, yet she goes for so little in the trans-

action with me, her unimpassioned bridegroom, that I hope to make some relaxation of my rights over her the means of obtaining the concessions which I think most important.

"I will not deny that an aversion to awakening bustle, an encountering reproach, has made me so slow in looking after my interest, that the period will shortly expire, within which I ought, by old Scrog Mowbray's will, to qualify myself for becoming his heir by being the accepted husband of Miss Mowbray of St Ronan. Time was—time is—and, if I catch it not by the forelock as it passes, time will be no more—Nettlewood will be forfeited—and if I have in addition a lawsuit for my title, and for Oakendale, I run a risk of being altogether capotted. I must, therefore, act at all risks, and with vigour—and this is the general plan of my campaign, subject always to be altered according to circumstances. I have obtained I may say purchased—Mowbray's consent to address his sister. I have this advantage, that if she agrees to take me, she will for ever put a stop to all disagreeable reports and recollections founded on her former conduct. In that case I secure the Nettlewood property and am ready to wage war for my paternal estate. Indeed, I firmly believe that, should this happy consummation take place, Monsieur Martigny will be too much heart-broken to make further fight, he will e'en throw helve after hatchet, and run to hide himself, after the fashion of a true lover, in some desert beyond seas.

"But supposing the lady has the bad taste to be obstinate, and will none of me, I still think that her happiness, or her peace of mind will be as dear to Martigny as Gibraltar is to the Spaniards, and he will sacrifice a great deal to induce me to give up my pretensions. Now I shall want some one to act as my agent in communicating with this fellow; for I will not deny that my old appetite for cutting his throat may awaken suddenly, were I to hold personal intercourse with him. Come thou, therefore, without delay, and hold my hand—Come, for you know me, and that I never left a kindness unrewarded. To be specific, you shall have means to pay off a certain inconvenient mortgage without troubling the tribe of Issachar, and you will but be true to me in this matter—Come, therefore, without farther apologies or farther delay. There shall, I give you my word, neither be risk or offence in the part of the drama which I intend to commit to your charge.

"Talking of the drama, we had a miserable attempt at a splendid bastard theatricals at Mowbray's rat-gnawed mansion. There were two things worth noticing—One, that I lost all the courage on the stage. I pique myself, and fairly fled from the pit rather than present myself before Miss Clara Mowbray, when it came to the push. Upon this I pray you to remark, that I am a person of singular delicacy and modesty, instead of being the Drawcansir and Darlington that you would make of me. The other memorable is of a more delicate nature, respecting the conduct of a certain fair lady, who was determined to fling herself at my head. There is a wonderful deal of freemasonry among us folk of spirit; and it is astonishing how soon we can place ourselves on a footing with neglected wives and discontented daughters. If you come not soon, one of the re-

and out to you in my former letter will certainly not be forthcoming. A schoolboy keeps gingerbread for his comrade without feeling a desire to nibble at it; so, if you appear not to look after your own interest, say you had fair warning. For my own part, I am rather embarrassed than gratified by the prospect of such an affair, when I am on the tapis another of a different nature. This enigma I will explain at meeting.

Thus finishes my long communication. If my motives of action do not appear explicit, think in what a maze fortune has involved me, and how much must necessarily depend on the chapter of accidents. Yesterday I may be said to have opened my siege, for I presented myself before Clara. I had no very flattering reception—that was of the consequence, for I did not expect one. By alarming her fears, I made an impression thus far, that she acquiesces in my appearing before her as her brother's guest, and this is no small point gained. She will become accustomed to look on me, and will remember with less bitterness the trick which I played her formerly; while I, on the other hand, by a similar force of habit, will get over certain awkward feelings with which I have been compunctiously visited whenever I look upon her.—Adieu! Health and brotherhood.

“Thine,

“ETHERINGTON.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE REPLY.

Thou bear'st a precious burden, gentle post,
Nitre and sulphur—See that it explode not.

Old Play.

I HAVE received your two long letters, my dear Etherington, with equal surprise and interest; for what I knew of your Scottish adventure before, was by no means sufficient to prepare me for a statement so inversely complicated. The Ignis Fatuus which, you say, governs your father, seems to have ruled the fortunes of your whole tribe, there is so much eccentricity in all that you have told me. But *à propos*, Etherington, you were my friend—you held me up when I was completely broken down; and whatever you may think, my services are at your command, much more from reflections on the past than hopes for the future. I am no speech-maker, but this you may rely on while I continue to be Harry Jekyl. You have deserved love at my hands, Etherington, and you have it.

Perhaps I love you the better since your perplexities have become known to me; for, my dear Etherington, you were before too much an object of envy to be entirely an object of affection. What a happy fellow! was the song of all who named your rank, and a fortune to maintain it—luck sufficient to repair all the waste that you could make of your income, and skill to back that luck, or supply it, should it for a moment fail you.—The cards turning up as if to your wish—the

dice rolling, it almost seemed, at your wink—it was rather your look than the touch of your cue that sent the ball into the pocket. You seemed to have fortune in chains, and a man of less honour would have been almost suspected of helping his luck by a little art.—You won every bet; and the instant that you were interested, one might have named the winning horse—it was always that which you were to gain most by.—You never held out your piece but the game went down—and then the women!—with face, manners, person, and, above all, your tongue—what wild work have you made among them! Good heaven! and have you had the old sword hanging over your head by a horsehair all this while?—Has your rank been doubtful? Your fortune unsettled?—And your luck, so constant in everything else, has that, as well as your predominant influence with the women, failed you, when you wished to form a connection for life, and when the care of your fortune required you to do so?—Etherington, I am astonished!—The Mowbray scrape I always thought an inconvenient one, as well as the quarrel with this same Tyrrel, or Martigny; but I was far from guessing the complicated nature of your perplexities.

“But I must not run on in a manner which, though it relieves my own marvelling mind, cannot be very pleasant to you. Enough, I look on my obligations to you as more light to be borne, than I have some chance of repaying them to a certain extent; but even were the full debt paid, I would remain as much attached to you as ever. It is your friend who speaks, Etherington; and if he offers his advice in somewhat plain language, do not, I entreat you, suppose that your confidence has encouraged an offensive familiarity, but consider me as one who, in a weighty matter, writes plainly to avoid the least chance of misconstruction.

“Etherington, your conduct hitherto has resembled anything rather than the coolness and judgment which are so peculiarly your own when you choose to display them. I pass over the masquerade of your marriage—it was a boy's trick, which could hardly have availed you much, even if successful; for what sort of a wife would you have acquired, had this same Clara Mowbray proved willing to have accepted the change which you had put upon her, and transferred herself, without repugnance, from one bridegroom to another?—Poor as I am, I know that neither Nettlewood nor Oakeley should have bribed me to marry such a——. I cannot decorously fill up the blank.

“Neither, my dear Etherington, can I forgive you the trick put on the clergyman, in whose eyes you destroyed the poor man's character to induce him to consent to perform the ceremony. You have thereby perhaps fixed an indelible stain on her for life, which was not a fair *ruse de guerre*.—As it is, you have taken little by your stratagem—unless, indeed, it should be difficult for the young lady to prove the imposition put upon her—for that being admitted, the marriage certainly goes for nothing. At least, the only use you could make of it, would be to drive her into a more formal union, free of having this whole unpleasant discussion brought into a court of law; and in this, with all the advantages you possess, joined to your own arts of persuasion and her brother's influence, I should

very likely to succeed. All women are necessarily the slaves of their reputation. I have known some who have given up their lives to preserve their character, which is, after all, only the shadow of it. I therefore would not conceive it difficult for Clara Mowbray to persuade herself to become a countess rather than be the topic of conversation for all Britain, while a lawsuit betwixt you is in dependence; and that may be for the greater part of both your lives.

But, in Miss Mowbray's state of mind, it may require time to bring her to such a conclusion; and I fear you will be thwarted in your operations by your rival—I will not offend you by calling him your brother. Now, it is here that I think with pleasure I may be of some use to you,—under this special condition, that there shall be no thoughts of farther violence taking place between you. However you may have smoothed over your rencontre to yourself, there is no doubt that the public would have regarded any accident which might have befallen on that occasion as a crime of the deepest dye, and the law would have followed it with the most severe punishment. As for all that I have said of my serviceable disposition, I would far stop short on this side of the gallows—my neck is too long already. Without a jest, Etherington, you must be ruled by counsel in this matter. I detect your hatred to this man in every line of your letter, even when you write with the greatest coolness; even where there is an affectation of gaiety, I read your sentiments on the subject; and they are such as—I will not preach to you—I will not say a good man—but such as every wise man—every man who wishes to live on fair terms with the world, and to escape general condemnation, and perhaps a violent death, where all men will clap their hands and rejoice at the punishment of the fratricide—would, with all possible speed, eradicate from his breast. My services, therefore, if they are worth your acceptance, are offered, on the condition that this unholy hatred be subdued with the utmost force of your powerful mind, and that you avoid everything which can possibly lead to such a catastrophe as you have twice narrowly escaped. I do not ask you to like this man, for I know well the deep root which your prejudices hold in your mind; I merely ask you to avoid him, and to think of him as one who, if you do meet him, can never be the object of personal resentment.

On these conditions I will instantly join you at your Spaw, and wait but your answer to throw myself into the post-chaise. I will see out this Martigny for you, and I have the vanity to think I shall be able to persuade him to take the course which his own true interest, as well as yours, so plainly points out—and that is, to depart and make us free of him. You must not grudge a round sum of money, should that prove necessary—we must make wings for him to fly with, and I must be empowered by you to that purpose. I cannot think you have anything serious to fear from a lawsuit. Your father threw out this sinister hint at a moment when he was hurried at his wife and irritated by his son; and I have little doubt that his expressions were merely flashes of anger at the moment, though I see they have made a deep impression on you. At all events, he spoke of a preference to his illegitimate son, as something

which it was in his own power to give or to withhold; and he died without bestowing it. The family seem addicted to irregular matrimony, and some left-handed marriage there may have been used to propitiate the modesty and save the conscience of a French lady; but that anything of the nature of a serious and legal ceremony took place, nothing but the strongest proof can make me believe.

"I repeat, then, that I have little doubt that the claims of Martine, whatever they are, may be easily compounded, and England cleared of him. This will be more easily done if he really enters into such a romantic passion as you describe, for Miss Clara Mowbray. It would be easy to show him that, whether she is disposed to accept your lordship's hand or not, her quiet and peace of mind must depend on his leaving the country. Rely on it, I shall find out the way to smooth him down, and whether distance or the grave divide Martine and you is very little to the purpose, unless in so far as the one can be attained with honour and safety, and the other, if attempted, would only make all concerned the subject of general execration and deserved punishment.—Speak the word, and I attend you, as ever truly grateful and devoted

"HENRY JEKYL

To this admonitory epistle, the writer received, in the course of the post, the following answer:—

"My truly grateful and devoted Henry Jekyl has adopted a course which seems to be exalted without any occasion. Why, thou curious monitor, have I not repeated a hundred times that I regret sincerely of the foolish rencontre, and am determined to curb my temper, and be on my guard in future?—And what need you say upon me, with your long lesson about execration, and punishment, and fratricide, and so forth?—You deal with an argument as a man does with the first hare he shoots, which he never thinks dead until he has fired the second barrel into her. What a fellow you would have been for a lawyer! how long you would have held forth upon the plainest cause, until the poor bothered judge was almost willing to decide against justice that he might be revenged on you. If I repeat what I have said twenty times, I tell you I have no thought of proceeding with this fellow as I would with another. If my father's blood be in his veins, it shall save the skin his mother gave him. And so come, without more parade either of stipulation or argument. Thou art, indeed, a curious animal! One would think I had read your communication, that you had yourself discovered the propriety of acting as a negotiator, and the reasons which might induce the course of such a treaty, be urged with advantage to induce the fellow to leave the country—Why, this is the very course I pointed out in my last letter. You are bolder than the boldest gipsy; you not only steal my ideas, and disfigure them that they may pass for yours, but you have the assurance to come a-begging with them to the door of the original parent! No man like you for stealing other men's inventions, and cooking them up in your own way. However, Harry, bating a little self-conceit and assumption

as honest a fellow as ever man put faith in—clever, too, in your style, though not quite the genius you would fain pass for.—Come on thine own terms, and come as speedily as thou canst. I do reckon the promise I made the less binding, that you very generously make no allusion to it.

“Thine,

“ETHERINGTON.

P.S.—One single caution I must add—do not mention my name to any one at Harrowgate, or your prospect of meeting me, or the price which you are about to take. On the purpose of your journey it is unnecessary to recommend silence. I know not whether such doubts are natural to all who have secret measures to pursue, or whether nature has given me an unusual share of anxious suspicion; but I cannot divest myself of the idea, that I am closely watched by some one whom I cannot discover. Although I concealed my purpose of coming hither from all mankind but you, whom I do not for a moment suspect of blabbing, yet it was known to this Martigny, when he is down here before me. Again, I said not a word—gave not credit to any one of my views towards Clara, yet the tattling people have had spread a report of a marriage depending between us, even where I could make the motion to her brother. To be sure, in such society there is nothing talked of but marrying and giving in marriage; and this, which alarms me, as connected with my own private purposes, may be a bare rumour, arising out of the gossip of the village.—Yet I feel like the poor woman in the old story, who felt herself watched by an eye that glared upon her from behind the tapestry.

I should have told you in my last that I had been recognised at a public entertainment by the old clergyman who pronounced the nuptial blessing on Clara and me, nearly eight years ago. He insisted upon addressing me by the name of Valentine Bulmer, under which I was then best known. It did not suit me at present to put into my confidence, so I cut him, Harry, as I would an old man. The task was the less difficult, that I had to do with one of the most absent men that ever dreamed with his eyes open. I verily believe he might be persuaded that the whole transaction was a fiction, and that he had never in reality seen me before. Your pious scruple, therefore, about what I told him formerly concerning the matter is quite thrown away. After all, if what I said was not accurate, true, as I certainly believe it was an exaggeration, it was all in Francis of Martigny's fault, I suppose. I am sure he had love and opportunity on his side.

“I enclose you have a postscript, Harry, longer than the letter, but it concludes with the same burden—Come, and come quickly.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FRIGHT.

As shakes the bough of trembling leaf,
 When sudden whirlwinds rise,
 As stands aghast the warrior chief,
 When his base army flies.

* * * * *

It had been settled by all who took the matter into consideration that the fidgety, fiery old Nabob would soon quarrel with his lady, Mrs Dods, and become impatient of his residence at St Ronan. A man so kind to himself, and so inquisitive about the affairs of others could have, it was supposed, a limited sphere for gratification either of his tastes or of his curiosity in the Aultoun of St Ronan's; many a time the precise day and hour of his departure were fixed among the idlers at the Spaw. But still old Touchwood appeared among them when the weather permitted, with his nut-brown visage, throat carefully wrapped up in an immense Indian kerchief, and gold-headed cane, which he never failed to carry over his shoulder. His short but stout limbs and his active step showed plainly that he took it rather as a badge of dignity than a means of support. There he stood, answering shortly and gruffly to all questions proposed to him, and making his remarks aloud upon the company, with great interference as to the offence which might be taken; and as soon as the ancient priestess had handed him his glass of the salutiferous water, he turned on his heel with a brief good morning, and either made his way back to hide himself in the Manse, with his crony, Mr Cargill, to engage in some hobby-horsical pursuit connected with his neighbours in the Aultoun.

The truth was, that the honest gentleman having, so far as Mrs Dods would permit, put matters to rights within her residence, wisely abstained from pushing his innovations any farther, and that it is not every stone which is capable of receiving the last drop of polish. He next set himself about putting Mr Cargill's study into order; and without leave asked or given by that reverend gentleman, he actually accomplished as wonderful a reformation in the Manse, as could have been effected by a benevolent Brownie. The floors were sometimes swept—the carpets were sometimes shaken, the plates and dishes were cleaner—there was tea and sugar in the tea-chest, and a joint of meat at proper times was to be found in the larder. The elder maid-servant wore a good stuff gown, and so trig and neat, that some said she was too handsome for the service of a bachelor divine; and others, that they saw no business so far from a fool as the Nabob had to be meddling with a lassie's busking. For such evil bruits Mr Touchwood cared not, even if he happened to hear of them, which was very doubtful. Add to all these changes that the garden was weeded, and the glebe was regularly labour-

the talisman by which all this desirable alteration was wrought, consisted partly in small presents, partly in constant attention. The quality of the singular old gentleman gave him a perfect right to do when he saw things wrong; the domestics, who had fallen into sloth and indifference, began to exert themselves under Mr Touchwood's new system of rewards and surveillance; and the miners, half unconscious of the cause, reaped the advantage of the exertions of his busy friend. Sometimes he lifted his head, when he heard workmen thumping and bouncing in the neighbourhood of his house, and demanded the meaning of the clatter which annoyed him; and on receiving for answer that it was by order of Mr Touchwood, resumed his labours, under the persuasion that all was well.

But even the Augean task of putting the Manse in order did not diminish the gigantic activity of Mr Touchwood. He aspired to universal dominion in the Aultoun of St Ronan's; and, like most men of an ardent temper, he contrived, in a great measure, to possess himself of the authority which he longed after. Then was there waged by him with all the petty, but perpetual nuisances, which marked a Scottish town of the old stamp—then was the hereditary ghill, which had reeked before the window of the cottage for a score years, transported behind the house—then was the broken wheelbarrow or unserviceable cart removed out of the footpath—old hat, or blue petticoat, taken from the window into which it had been stuffed, “to expel the winter’s flaw,” was consigned to the fire, and its place supplied by good perspicuous glass. The means by which such reformation was effected, were the same as resorted to by the Manse—money and admonition. The latter given alone would have met little attention—perhaps would have provoked opposition; but softened and sweetened by a little present to assist the reform recommended, it sunk into the hearts of the hearers, and in general overcame their objections. Besides, an opinion of the Nabob’s wealth was high among the villagers; and an idea prevailed amongst them that, notwithstanding his keeping no servants or equipage, he was able to purchase, if he pleased, half the land in the country. It was not grand carriages and fine liveries that made heavy purses, but rather helped to lighten them; and they said, who pretended to know what they were talking about, that old Turnpenny, and Mr Dloose to boot, would tell down more money on Mr Touchwood’s word, than upon the joint bond of half the fine folks at the Aultoun. Such an opinion smoothed everything before the path of one who showed himself neither averse to give nor to lend; and it by no means diminished the reputation of his wealth, that in transactions of business he was not carelessly negligent of his interest, but plainly proved he understood the value of what he was parting with. Few, therefore, cared to withstand the humours of a whimsical old gentleman, who had both the will and the means of obliging those disposed to comply with his fancies; and thus the singular stranger contrived, in the course of a brief space of days or weeks, to place the villagers more absolutely at his devotion, than they had been to the pleasure of any individual since their ancient lords had left the Aultoun. The office of the baron-bailie himself, though the office was vested in the

person of old Meiklewham, was a subordinate jurisdiction, compared to the voluntary allegiance which the inhabitants paid to Mr Touchwood.

There were, however, recusants who declined the authority thus set up amongst them, and, with the characteristic obstinacy of the countrymen, refused to hearken to the words of the stranger, whether they were for good or for evil. These men's dunghills were not moved, nor the stumblingblocks taken from the footpath, where they passed the front of their houses. And it befell, that while Mr Touchwood was most eager in abating the nuisances of the village, he very nearly experienced a frequent fate of great reformers—that of losing his life by means of one of those enormities which as yet subsisted in spite of all his efforts.

The Nabob finding his time after dinner hang somewhat heavy on his hand, and the moon being tolerably bright, had, one happy evening, sought his usual remedy for dispelling ennui by a walk in the Manse, where he was sure that, if he could not succeed in engaging the minister himself in some disputation, he would at least find something in the establishment to animadvert upon and restore to order.

Accordingly, he had taken the opportunity to lecture the young of the minister's lasses upon the duty of wearing shoes and stockings, and as his advice came fortified by a present of six pair of white cotton hose, and two pair of stout leathern shoes, it was received with respect only, but with gratitude, and the chuck under the chin that rounded up the oration, while she opened the outer door for honour, was acknowledged with a blush and a giggle. Nay, so did Grizzy carry her sense of Mr Touchwood's kindness, that, serving the moon was behind a cloud, she very carefully offered to escort him to the Cleikum Inn with a lantern, in case he should come to some harm by the gate. This the traveller's independent spirit scorned to listen to; and having briefly assured her that he had walked the streets of Paris and of Madrid whole nights without an accommodation, he stoutly strode off on his return to his lodging.

An accident, however, befell him, which, unless the police of Madrid and Paris be belied, might have happened in either of those twosplendid capitals, as well as in the miserable Aultoun of St Ronan. Before the door of Saunders Jaup, a feuar of some importance, he held his land free, and caredna a bodle for ony ane," yawned over an odoriferous gulf, ycleped, in Scottish phrase, the jaw-hole; in other words, an uncovered common sewer. The local situation of this receptacle of filth was well known to Mr Touchwood; for Saunders Jaup was at the very head of those who held out for the practice of their fathers, and still maintained those ancient and unsavoury customs which our traveller had in so many instances succeeded in abating. Guided, therefore, by his nose, the Nabob made a considerable circuit to avoid the displeasure and danger of passing this puddle at the nearest, and by that means fell upon Scylla, instead of avoiding Charybdis. In plain language, he approached near the bank of a little rivulet, which in that place passed beneath the footpath and the horse road, that he lost his footing, and fell.

channel of the streamlet from a height of three or four feet. It was thought that the noise of his fall, or at least his call for assistance, must have been heard in the house of Saunders Jaup; but that nearest person was, according to his own account, at that time engaged in the exercise of the evening—an excuse which passed current, although Saunders was privately heard to allege, that the town would have been the quieter, “if the auld meddling busybody had been still in the burn for gude and a’.”

But fortune had provided better for poor Touchwood, whose motives, as they arose out of the most excellent motives, would have deserved so severe a fate. A passenger, who heard him shout for help, ventured cautiously to the side of the bank, down which he had fallen; and, after ascertaining the nature of the ground as carefully as the darkness permitted, was at length, and not without some effort, enabled to assist him out of the channel of the rivulet.

“Are you hurt materially?” said this good Samaritan to the object of his care.

“No—no—d—n it—no,” said Touchwood, extremely angry at his master, and the cause of it. “Do you think I, who have been at the summit of Mount Athos, where the precipice sinks a thousand feet to the sea, care a farthing about such a fall as this is?”

But, as he spoke, he reeled, and his kind assistant caught him by the arm to prevent his falling.

“I fear you are more hurt than you suppose, sir,” said the stranger; “permit me to go home along with you.”

“With all my heart,” said Touchwood; “for, though it is impossible I can need help in such a foolish matter, yet I am equally obliged to you, friend; and if the Cleikum Inn be not out of your road, I will leave your arm so far, and thank you to the boot.”

“It is much at your service, sir,” said the stranger; “indeed, I am thinking to lodge there for the night.”

“I am glad to hear it,” resumed Touchwood; “you shall be my guest, and I will make them look after you in proper fashion—You seem to be a very civil sort of fellow, and I do not find your arm inconvenient—it is the rheumatism makes me walk so ill—the pest of that have been in hot climates when they settle among these d—ds.”

“Lean as hard and walk as slow as you will, sir,” said the benevolent assistant—“this is a rough street.”

“Yes, sir—and why is it rough?” answered Touchwood. “Why, because the old pig-headed fool, Saunders Jaup, will not allow it to be made smooth. There he sits, sir, and obstructs all rational improvement; and, if a man would not fall into his infernal putrid gutter, he would become an abomination to himself, and odious to others, for the whole life to come, he runs the risk of breaking his neck, as I have done to-night.”

“I am afraid, sir,” said his companion, “you have fallen on the most dangerous side.—You remember Swift’s proverb, ‘The more hurt, the less hurt.’”

“But why should there be either dirt or hurt in a well-regulated street?” answered Touchwood—“Why should not men be able to go

about their affairs at night, in such a hamlet as this, without endangering necks or noses?—Our Scottish magistrates are worth nothing, sir—nothing at all. Oh for a Turkish Cadi, now, to trouble the scoundrel—or the Mayor of Calcutta, to bring him into his court—or were it but an English Justice of the Peace that is newly included in the commission—they would abate the villain's nuisance with vengeance on him—But here we are—this is the Cleikum Inn! Hallo—hillock—house!—Eppie Anderson!—Beenie Chambermaid—boy Boots!—Mrs Dods!—are you all of you asleep and dead? Here have I been half murdered, and you let me stand bawling at the door!”

Eppie Anderson came with a light, and so did Beenie Chambermaid with another; but no sooner did they look upon the pair who stood in the porch under the huge sign that swung to and fro with heavy creaking, than Beenie screamed, flung away her candle, took a four in the pound, and in a newly japanned candlestick, and in one way, while Eppie Anderson, echoing the yell, brandished her light round her head like a Bacchante flourishing her torch, and ran in another direction.

“Ay—I must be a bloody spectacle,” said Mr Touchwood, let himself fall heavily upon his assistant's shoulder, and wiping his face, which trickled with wet—“I did not think I had been so seriously hurt; but I find my weakness now—I must have lost much blood.”

“I hope you are still mistaken,” said the stranger; “but here is the way to the kitchen—we shall find light there, since no one chooses to bring it to us.”

He assisted the old gentleman into the kitchen—where a lamp as well as a bright fire, was burning, by the light of which he could easily discern that the supposed blood was only water of the river, and indeed, none of the cleanest, although much more so than the sufferer would have found it a little lower, where the stream is joined by the superfluities of Saunders Jaup's paladium. Relieved by his new friend's repeated assurances that such was the case, the stranger began to bustle up a little, and his companion, desirous to render him every assistance, went to the door of the kitchen to call for a basin and water. Just as he was about to open the door, the voice of Mrs Dods was heard as she descended the stairs, in a tone of indignation by no means unusual to her, yet mingled at the same time with a few notes that sounded like unto the quiverings of consternation.

“Idle limmers—silly sluts—I'll warrant nane o' ye will ever do anything waur than yoursell, ye silly taupies—Ghaist, indeed! I'll warrant it's some idle dub-skelper frae the Waal, coming after ye o' yoursells on nae honest errand—Ghaist, indeed!—Haud up your candle, John Ostler—I'll warrant it a twa-handed ghaist, and a door left on the sneck—There's somebody in the kitchen—gang in ward wi' the lantern, John Ostler.”

At this critical moment the stranger opened the door of the kitchen, and beheld the dame advancing at the head of her household troops. The ostler and humpbacked postilion, one bearing a stable-lantern and a hay-fork, the other a rushlight and a bundle

stituted the advanced guard; Mrs Dods herself formed the centre, ringing loud and brandishing a pair of tongs; while the two maids, troops not much to be trusted after their recent defeat, followed, creeping in the rear. But notwithstanding this admirable disposition, no sooner had the stranger shown his face, and pronounced the words "Mrs Dods," than a panic seized the whole array. The advanced guard recoiled in consternation, the ostler upsetting Mrs Dods in the confusion of his retreat; while she, grappling with him under terror, secured him by the ears and hair, and they joined their fellows together in hideous chorus. The two maidens resumed their former flight, and took refuge in the darksome den, entitled their room, while the humpbacked postilion fled like the wind into the stable, and, with professional instinct, began, in the extremity of his terror, to saddle a horse.

Meanwhile, the guest whose appearance had caused this combustion, plucked the roaring ostler from above Mrs Dods, and pushing her away with a hearty slap on the shoulder, proceeded to raise and encourage the fallen landlady, inquiring, at the same time, "What, in the devil's name, was the cause of all this senseless confusion?"

"And what is the reason, in Heaven's name," answered the matron, wiping her eyes firmly shut, and still shrewish in her expostulation, though in the very extremity of terror, "what is the reason that you should come and frighten a decent house, where you met nae one but the height of civility?"

"And why should I frighten you, Mrs Dods, or in one word, what is the meaning of all this nonsensical terror?"

"Are not you," said Mrs Dods, opening her eyes a little as she spoke, "the ghaist of Francis Tirl?"

"I am Francis Tyrrel, unquestionably, my old friend?"

"I kend it! I kend it!" answered the honest woman, relapsing into her agony; and I think ye might be ashamed of yourself, that ye should be a ghaist, and have nae better to do than to frighten a pair auld wife."

"On my word, I am no ghost, but a living man," answered Tyrrel.

"Were you not murdered, than?" said Mrs Dods, still in an uncertain voice, and only partially opening her eyes—"Are ye very sure ye werena murdered?"

"Why, not that ever I heard of, certainly, dame," replied Tyrrel. "But I shall be murdered presently," said old Touchwood from the kitchen, where he had hitherto remained a mute auditor of this extraordinary scene—"I shall be murdered, unless you fetch me some water without delay."

"Coming, sir, coming," answered Dame Dods, her professional sympathy being as familiar to her as that of poor Francis's "Anon, anon,"

"As I live by honest reckonings," said she, fully collecting herself, and giving a glance of more composed temper at Tyrrel, "believe it is yourself, Maister Frank, in blood and body after a'—see if I dinna gie a proper sorting to yon twa silly jauds that mak me mak a bogle of you, and a fule of mysell—Ghaist! my dearie, I sall ghaist them—if they had their heads as muckle on

their wark as on their daffing they wad play na sic pliskies—the wanton steed that scaurs at the windle-strae—Ghaists! wha e' heard of ghaists in an honest house? Naebody need fear bogie that has a conscience void of offence.—But I am blithe that Ma Turk hasna murdered ye when a' is dune, Mr Francie."

"Come this way, Mother Dods, if you would not have me do mischief;" exclaimed Touchwood, grasping a plate which stood on the dresser, as if he were about to heave it at the landlady, by way of recalling her attention.

"For the love of Heaven, dinna break it!" exclaimed the alarm landlady, knowing that Touchwood's effervescence of impatience sometimes expended itself at the expense of her crockery, though it was afterwards liberally atoned for. "Lord, sir, are ye out of your wits!—it breaks a set, ye ken—Godsake, put down the cheek-plate, and try your hand on the delf-ware!—It will jist make good a jingle—But, Lord haud a grip o' us! now I look at ye, we can hae come ower ye, and what sort of a plight are ye in?—Wait I fetch water and a towel."

In fact, the miserable guise of her new lodger now overcame the dame's curiosity to inquire after the fate of her earlier acquaintance, and she gave her instant and exclusive attention to Mr Touchwood with many exclamations, while aiding him to perform the task of ablution and abstertion. Her two fugitive handmaidens had by this time returned to the kitchen, and endeavoured to suppress their smuggled laugh at the recollection of their mistress's panic, acting very officiously in Mr Touchwood's service. By dint of washing and drying, the token of the sable stains was at length removed, and the veteran became, with some difficulty, satisfied that he had been more dirtied and frightened than hurt.

Tyrrel in the mean time stood looking on with wonder, imagining that he beheld in the features which emerged from a mask of mud the countenance of an old friend. After the operation was ended, he could not help addressing himself to Mr Touchwood, to demand whether he had not the pleasure to see a friend to whom he had been obliged when at Smyrna, for some kindness respecting money matters?

"Not worth speaking of—not worth speaking of," said Touchwood hastily. "Glad to see you, though—glad to see you. Here I am; you will find me the same good-natured old fool that I was at Smyrna—never look how I am to get in money again, always laying it out. Never mind—it was written in my forehead as the Turk says. I will go up now and change my dress—you can sup with me when I come back—Mrs Dods will toss us up something—a brandered fowl will be best, Mrs Dods, with some muller, and get us a jug of mulled wine—plottie, as you call it—put the recollection of the old Presbyterian's common sewer out of my head."

So saying, up-stairs marched the traveller to his own apartment, while Tyrrel, seizing upon a candle, was about to do the same.

"Mr Touchwood is in the blue room, Mrs Dods; I suppose I shall take possession of the yellow one?"

Suppose naething about the matter, Mr Francie Tirl, till ye tell downright where ye hae been a' this time, and whether ye hae murdered or no?"

I think you may be pretty well satisfied of that, Mrs Dods?"

Troth! and so I am in a sense; and yet it gars me grue to look on ye, sae many days and weeks it has been since I thought ye were rotten in the moulds. And now to see ye standing before hale and feir, and crying for a bedroom like ither folk!"

One would almost suppose, my good friend," said Tyrrel, "that we were sorry at my having come alive again."

It's no for that," replied Mrs Dods, who was peculiarly ingenious in the mode of framing and stating what she conceived to be her advances; "but is it not a queer thing for a decent man like your Maister Tirl, to be leaving your lodgings without a word spoken, and me put to a' these charges in seeking for your dead body, and my near taking my business out of honest Maister Bindloose's hands, because he kend the cantrips of the like of you better than I did?—than they hae putten up an advertisement down at the Waal yon- wi' a' their names at it, setting ye forth, Maister Francie, as ane of the greatest blackguards unhanged; and wha div ye think is to put ye in a creditable house if that's the character ye get?"

You may leave that to me, Mrs Dods—I assure you that matter will be put to rights to your satisfaction; and I think, so long as we are known each other, you may take my word that I am not undervaluing the shelter of your roof for a single night (I shall ask it no longer), until my character is sufficiently cleared. It was for that purpose I chiefly came back again."

Came back again!" said Mrs Dods. "I profess ye made me start, Maister Tirl, and you looking sae pale, too. But I think," she added, smiling after a joke, "if ye were a ghaist, seeing we are such auld acquaintance, ye wadna wish to spoil my custom, but would just walk gently up and down the auld castle wa's, or maybe down at the kirk-der—there have been awfu' things dune in that kirk and kirkyard whiles dinna like to look that way, Maister Francie."

I am much of your mind, mistress," said Tyrrel, with a sigh; "and, indeed, I do in one sense resemble the apparitions you talk of, like them, and to as little purpose, I stalk about scenes where happiness departed. But I speak riddles to you, Mrs Dods—the truth is, that I met with an accident on the day I last left your house, the effects of which detained me at some distance from St Ronan's till this very day."

Heigh, sirs, and ye were sparing of your trouble that wadna write a line, or send a bit message!—Ye might hae thought folk wad have been vexed enough about ye, forby undertaking journeys, and sending folk to seek for your dead body."

I shall willingly pay all reasonable charges which my disappearance may have occasioned," answered her guest; "and I assure you, for all, that my remaining for some time quiet at Marchthorn is partly from illness and partly from business of a very pressing particular nature."

At Marchthorn!" exclaimed Dame Dods, "heard ever man the

wi' the upcast and terror that I got a wee while syne, and what a bit taste that I behoved to take of the plottie while I was in it, my head is sair eneugh distressed the night already.—After Tirl, the yellow room is ready for ye when you like; and, remember, as the morn is the Sabbath, I canna be keeping the serqueans out of their beds to wait on ye ony langer, for they will take it an excuse for lying till aught o'clock on the Lord's day. So, when your plottie is done, I'll be muckle obliged to ye to light the room candles, and put out the double moulds, and e'en show your- to your beds; for douce folks, sic as the like of you, should set an example by ordinary.—And so gude-night to ye baith."

"By my faith," said Touchwood, as she withdrew, "our dame is as obstinate as a Pacha with three tails!—We have her gracious permission to finish our mug, however; so here is to your health and more, Mr Tyrrel, wishing you a hearty welcome to your own try."

"Thank you, Mr Touchwood," answered Tyrrel; "and I return the same good wishes, with, as I sincerely hope, a much greater chance of their being realised—You relieved me, sir, at a time when the villany of an agent, prompted, as I have reason to think, by an old and powerful enemy, occasioned my being, for a time, pressed for funds.—I made remittances to the *Ragion* you dealt with, to discharge myself at least of the pecuniary part of my obligation; but the bills were returned because it was stated you had left Smyrna." "Very true—very true—left Smyrna, and here I am in Scotland—For the bills, we will speak of them another time—something due to picking me out of the gutter."

"I shall make no deduction on that account," said Tyrrel, smiling, though in no jocose mood; "and I beg you not to mistake me. The circumstances of embarrassment, under which you found me at Smyrna, were merely temporary—I am most able and willing to pay my debt; and, let me add, I am most desirous to do so."

"Another time—another time," said Mr Touchwood—"time enough before us, Mr Tyrrel—besides, at Smyrna, you talked of a suit—law is a lick-penny, Mr Tyrrel—no counsellor like the law in purse."

"For my lawsuit," said Tyrrel, "I am fully provided."

"But have you good advice?—Have you good advice?" said Touchwood; "answer me that."

"I have advised with my lawyers," answered Tyrrel, internally, "and to find that his friend was much disposed to make his generosity upon the former occasion a pretext for prying farther into his affairs now than he thought polite or convenient."

"With your counsel learned in the law—eh, my dear boy? But the advice you should take is of some travelled friend, well acquainted with mankind and the world—some one that has lived double your years, and is maybe looking out for some bare young fellow that may do a little good to—one that might be willing to help you rather than I can pretend to guess—for, as to your lawyer, you get your guinea's worth from him—not even so much as the baker's shilling, thirteen to the dozen."

"I think I should not trouble myself to go far in search of a fault such as you describe," said Tyrrel, who could not affect to misunderstand the senior's drift, "when I was near Mr Peregrine Touchwood but the truth is, my affairs are at present so much complicated with those of others, whose secrets I have no right to communicate, I cannot have the advantage of consulting you or any other friend. It is possible I may be soon obliged to lay aside this reserve and vindicate myself before the whole public. I will not fail, when time shall arrive, to take an early opportunity of confidential communication with you."

"That is right—confidential is the word—no person ever made a confidant of me who repented it—Think what the Pacha might have made of it, had he taken my advice, and cut through the Isthmus of Suez.—Turk and Christian, men of all tongues and countries, to consult old Touchwood, from the building of a mosque down to the settling of an *agio*.—But come—Good-night—good-night."

So saying, he took up his bedroom light, and extinguished those which stood on the table, nodded to Tyrrel to discharge his share of the duty imposed by Mrs Dods with the same punctuality, and they withdrew to their several apartments, entertaining different sentiments of each other.

"A troublesome, inquisitive old gentleman," said Tyrrel to himself; "I remember him narrowly escaping the bastinado at Smyrna for thrusting his advice on the Turkish *cadi*—and then I lie under a considerable obligation to him, giving him a sort of right to advise me—Well, I must parry his impertinence as I can."

"A shy cock this Frank Tyrrel," thought the traveller; "a complete dodger!—But no matter—I shall wind him, were I as double like a fox—I am resolved to make his matters my own; if I cannot carry him through, I know not who can."

Having formed this philanthropic resolution, Mr Touchwood turned himself into bed, which luckily declined exactly at the right time, and, full of self-complacency, consigned himself to slumber.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MEDIATION.

———So, begone!

We will not now be troubled with reply;
We offer fair, take it advisedly.

King Henry IV. Part I.

It had been the purpose of Tyrrel, by rising and breakfasting early, to avoid again meeting Mr Touchwood, having upon his mind a matter in which that officious gentleman's interference was to prove troublesome. His character, he was aware, had been assailed at the Spaw in the most public manner, and in the most public manner he was resolved to demand redress, conscious that whatever

stant concerns had brought him to Scotland, must necessarily be postponed to the vindication of his honour. He was determined, for his purpose, to go down to the rooms when the company was assembled at the breakfast hour, and had just taken his hat to set out when he was interrupted by Mrs Dods, who, announcing "a gentleman that was speering for him," ushered into the chamber a fashionable young man in a military surtout, covered with silk and fur, and wearing a foraging-cap; a dress now too familiarly distinguished, but which at that time was used only by gentlemen of superior order. The stranger was neither handsome nor plain, but had in his appearance a good deal of pretension, and the cool superiority which belongs to high breeding. On his part, he eyed Tyrrel; and, as his appearance differed, perhaps, from that which the exterior of the Cleikum Inn had prepared him, he said something of the air with which he had entered the room, politely announced himself as Captain Jekyl, of the — Guards (entering, at the same time, his ticket).

"He presumed he spoke to Mr Martigny?"

"No Mr Francis Tyrrel, sir," replied Tyrrel, drawing himself up. "Martigny was my mother's name—I have never borne it."

"I am not here for the purpose of disputing that point, Mr Tyrrel, though I am not entitled to admit what my principal's information gives him to doubt."

"Your principal, I presume, is Sir Bingo Binks?" said Tyrrel. "I have not forgotten that there is an unfortunate affair between us."

"I have not the honour to know Sir Bingo Binks," said Captain Jekyl. "I come on the part of the Earl of Etherington."

Tyrrel stood silent for a moment, and then said, "I am at a loss to know what the gentleman who calls himself Earl of Etherington has to say to me, through the medium of such a messenger as yourself, Captain Jekyl. I should have supposed that, considering our unhappy relationship, and the terms on which we stand towards each other, the lawyers were the fitter negotiators between us."

"Sir," said Captain Jekyl, "you are misunderstanding my errand. I come on no message of hostile import from Lord Etherington, but am aware of the connection betwixt you, which would render my office altogether contradictory to common sense and the dictates of nature; and I assure you, I would lay down my life rather than be concerned in an affair so unnatural. I would act, if possible, as a mediator betwixt you."

They had hitherto remained standing. Mr Tyrrel now offered his hand for a seat; and, having assumed one himself, he broke the awkward pause which ensued by observing, "I should be happy, after experiencing such a long course of injustice and persecution from my friend, to learn, even at this late period, Captain Jekyl, anything which can make me think better, either of him or of his proceedings towards me and towards others."

"Mr Tyrrel," said Captain Jekyl, "you must allow me to speak plainly and candour. There is too great a stake betwixt your brother and yourself to permit you to be friends; but I do not see it is necessary that you should therefore be mortal enemies."

"I am not my brother's enemy, Captain Jekyl," said Tyrrel—have never been so—His friend I cannot be, and he knows but well the insurmountable barrier which his own conduct has placed between us."

"I am aware," said Captain Jekyl, slowly and expressively, "generally at least, of the particulars of your unfortunate disagreement."

"If so," said Tyrrel, colouring, "you must be also aware with what extreme pain I feel myself compelled to enter on such a subject with a total stranger—a stranger, too, the friend and confidant of one who—— But I will not hurt your feelings, Captain Jekyl, but rather endeavour to suppress my own. In one word, I beg to be favoured with the import of your communication, as I am obliged to go down to the Spaw this morning, in order to put to rights some matters there which concern me nearly."

"If you mean the cause of your absence from an appointment with Sir Bingo Binks," said Captain Jekyl, "the matter has been already completely explained. I pulled down the offensive placard with my own hand, and rendered myself responsible for your honour to one who should presume to hold it in future doubt."

"Sir," said Tyrrel, very much surprised, "I am obliged to you for your intention, the more so as I am ignorant how I have merited such interference. It is not, however, quite satisfactory to me, because I am accustomed to be the guardian of my own honour."

"An easy task, I presume, in all cases, Mr Tyrrel," answered Jekyl, "but peculiarly so in the present, when you will find no one so hardy as to assail it.—My interference, indeed, would have been unjustifiably officious, had I not been at the moment undertaking a commission implying confidential intercourse with you. For the sake of my own character it became necessary to establish your word. I know the truth of the whole affair from my friend, the Earl of Etherington, who ought to thank Heaven so long as he lives, that he saved him on that occasion from the commission of a very grave crime."

"Your friend, sir, has had, in the course of his life, much to thank Heaven for, but more for which to ask God's forgiveness."

"I am no divine, sir," replied Captain Jekyl, with spirit; "but I have been told that the same may be said of most men alive."

"I, at least, cannot dispute it," said Tyrrel; "but, to proceed—Have you found yourself at liberty, Captain Jekyl, to deliver to the public the whole particulars of a rencontre so singular as that which took place between your friend and me?"

"I have not, sir," said Jekyl—"I judged it a matter of great delicacy, and which each of you had the like interest to preserve secret."

"May I beg to know, then," said Tyrrel, "how it was possible for you to vindicate my absence from Sir Bingo's rendezvous of yesterday?"

"It was only necessary, sir, to pledge my word as a gentleman, and as a man of honour, characters in which I am pretty well known in the world, that, to my certain personal knowledge, you were hurried off by an affair with a friend of mine, the farther particulars of which prudence required should be sunk into oblivion. I think no

venture to dispute my word, or to require more than my assurance.—If there should be any one very hard of faith on the occasion, I will find a way to satisfy him. In the meanwhile your outlawry has been rescinded in the most honourable manner; and Sir Bingo, in consideration of his share in giving rise to reports so injurious to me, is desirous to drop all farther proceedings in his original quarrel, and hopes the whole matter will be forgot and forgiven on all sides.”

“Upon my word, Captain Jekyl,” answered Tyrrel, “you lay me under the necessity of acknowledging obligation to you. You have untied a knot which I should have found it very difficult to unloose; and I frankly confess, that, while I was determined not to remain under the stigma put upon me, I should have had great difficulty in clearing myself, without mentioning circumstances, which, were it not for the sake of my father’s memory, should be buried in eternal oblivion. I hope your friend feels no continued inconvenience from my exertions?”

“His lordship is nearly quite recovered,” said Jekyl. “And I trust he did me the justice to own, that, so far as my will was concerned, I am totally guiltless of the purpose of hurting him?” “He does you full justice in that and everything else,” replied Tyrrel; “regrets the impetuosity of his own temper, and is determined to be on his guard against it in future.”

“That,” said Tyrrel, “is so far well; and now, may I ask once more what communication you have to make to me on the part of your friend?—Were it from any one but him, whom I have found uniformly false and treacherous, your own fairness and candour would induce me to hope that this unnatural quarrel might be in some sort ended by your mediation.”

“I will then proceed, sir, under more favourable auspices than I expected,” said Captain Jekyl, “to enter on my commission.—You are at liberty to commence a lawsuit, Mr Tyrrel, if Fame does not wrong me for the purpose of depriving your brother of his estate and

“The case is not fairly stated, Captain Jekyl,” replied Tyrrel; “I will not commence a lawsuit, when I do commence it, for the sake of ascertaining my own just rights.”

“It comes to the same thing eventually,” said the mediator; “I am not called upon to decide upon the justice of your claims, but to state, as they are, you will allow, newly started. The late Countess of Etherington died in possession—open and undoubted possession—of her estate in society.”

“If she had no real claim to it, sir,” replied Tyrrel, “she had more than justice who enjoyed it so long; and the injured lady’s claims were postponed, had just so much less.—But this is not a point for you and me to discuss between us—it must be tried elsewhere.”

“Proofs, sir, of the strongest kind, will be necessary to overthrow so well established in public opinion as that of the present possessor of the title of Etherington.”

Tyrrel took a paper from his pocket-book, and, handing it to Cap-

tain Jekyl, only answered, "I have no thoughts of asking you give up the cause of your friend; but methinks the document which I give you a list, may shake your opinion of it."

Captain Jekyl read, muttering to himself, "*Certificate of marriage, by the Rev. Zadock Kemp, chaplain to the British Embassy at Paris, between Marie de Bellroche, Comtesse de Martigny, the Right Honourable John Lord Oakendale—Letters between J. Earl of Etherington and his lady, under the title of Madam Martigny—Certificate of baptism—Declaration of the Earl of Etherington on his deathbed.*"—All this is very well—but may I ask Mr Tyrrel, if it is really your purpose to go to extremity with your brother?"

"He has forgot that he is one—he has lifted his hand against life."

"You have shed his blood—twice shed it," said Jekyl; "the world will not ask which brother gave the offence, but which received which inflicted, the severest wound."

"Your friend has inflicted one on me, sir," said Tyrrel, "that will bleed while I have the power of memory."

"I understand you, sir," said Captain Jekyl; "you mean the affair of Miss Mowbray?"

"Spare me on that subject, sir!" said Tyrrel. "Hitherto I have disputed my most important rights—rights which involved my position in society, my fortune, the honour of my mother, with something of composure; but do not say more on the topic you have touched upon unless you would have before you a madman!—Is it possible for you to have heard even the outline of this story, and to imagine that I could ever reflect on the cold-blooded and most inhuman stratagem, with which this friend of yours prepared for two unfortunates, without—He started up, and walked impetuously to and fro. "Since that Fiend himself interrupted the happiness of perfect innocence, that was never such an act of treachery—never such schemes of happiness destroyed—never such inevitable misery prepared for wretches who had the idiocy to repose perfect confidence in him. Had there been passion in his conduct, it had been the act of a villain—a wicked man, indeed, but still a human creature, acting under the influence of human feelings—but his was the deed of a calm, calculating demon, actuated by the basest and most sordid motives—self-interest, joined, as I firmly believe, to an early and inveterate hatred of one whose claims he considered as at variance with his own."

"I am sorry to see you in such a temper," said Captain Jekyl calmly; "Lord Etherington, I trust, acted on very different motives than those you impute to him; and if you will but listen to me, perhaps something may be struck out which may accommodate the unhappy disputes."

"Sir," said Tyrrel, sitting down again, "I will listen to you with calmness, as I would remain calm under the probe of a surgeon tenting a festered wound. But when you touch me to the quick when you prick the very nerve, you cannot expect me to endure without wincing."

will endeavour, then, to be as brief in the operation as I can," said Captain Jekyl, who possessed the advantage of the most admirable composure during the whole conference. "I conclude, Mr. Tyrrel, that the peace, happiness, and honour of Miss Mowbray, are at your disposal?"

"Who dare impeach her honour!" said Tyrrel, fiercely; then, calming himself, added, in a more moderate tone, but one of deep gravity, "They are dear to me, sir, as my eyesight."

"My friend holds them in equal regard," said the Captain; "and come to the resolution of doing her the most ample justice."

"He can do her justice no otherwise than by ceasing to haunt this neighbourhood, to think, to speak, even to dream of her."

"Lord Etherington thinks otherwise," said Captain Jekyl; "he avers that if Miss Mowbray has sustained any wrong at his hands, and, of course, I am not called upon to admit, it will be best rewarded by the offer to share with her his title, his rank, and his fortune."

"His title, rank, and fortune, sir, are as much a falsehood as he is himself," said Tyrrel, with violence—"Marry Clara Mowbray?"

"My friend's fortune, you will observe," replied Jekyl, "depends entirely upon the event of the lawsuit with which you, Mr. Tyrrel, threaten him.—Deprive him, if you can, of the Oakendale estate, which is still a large patrimony by his mother; and besides, as to his marriage with Clara Mowbray, he conceives, that unless it should be contrary to the lady's wish to have the ceremony repeated, to which he is most anxious to defer his own opinion, they have only to declare that it has already passed between them."

"A trick, sir!" said Tyrrel, "a vile infamous trick! of which the vilest wretch in Newgate would be ashamed—the imposition of one name for another."

"Of that, Mr. Tyrrel, I have seen no evidence whatever. The lady's certificate is clear—Francis Tyrrel is united to Clara Mowbray in the holy bands of wedlock—such is the tenor—there is a full stop—nay, stop one instant, if you please, sir. You say there was an objection in the case—I have no doubt but you speak what you believe—and what Miss Mowbray told you. She was surprised—forced to take leave of the husband she had just married—ashamed to meet her former lover, to whom, doubtless, she had made many a protest of love, and ne'er a true one—what wonder that, unsupported by her bridegroom, she should have changed her tone, and thrown the blame of her own inconstancy on the absent swain?—A woman, in a position so critical, will make the most improbable excuse, rather than be found guilty on her own confession."

"There must be no jesting in this case," said Tyrrel, his cheek becoming pale, and his voice altered with passion.

"I am quite serious, sir," replied Jekyl; "and there is no law court in the land that would take the lady's word—all she has to offer, and in her own cause—against a whole body of evidence, direct, and circumstantial, showing that she was by her own free consent married to a gentleman who now claims her hand.—Forgive me, sir—I see

you are much agitated—I do not mean to dispute your right of believing what you think is most credible—I only use the freedom pointing out to you the impression which the evidence is likely to make on the minds of indifferent persons.”

“Your friend,” answered Tyrrel, affecting a composure, which however, he was far from possessing, “may think by such argument to screen his villany; but it cannot avail him—the truth is known to Heaven—it is known to me—and there is, besides, one indifferent witness upon earth, who can testify that the most abominable iniquity was practised on Miss Mowbray.”

“You mean her cousin,—Hannah Irwin, I think, is her name,” answered Jekyl; “you see I am fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. But where is Hannah Irwin to be found?”

“She will appear, doubtless, in Heaven’s good time, and to the confusion of him who now imagines the only witness of his treachery—the only one who could tell the truth of this complicated mystery—either no longer lives, or, at least, cannot be brought forward against him, to the ruin of his schemes. Yes, sir, that slight observation of yours has more than explained to me why your friend, or to him by his true name, Mr Valentine Bulmer, has not commenced his machinations sooner, and also why he has commenced them now. He thinks himself certain that Hannah Irwin is not now in Britain, or to be produced in a court of justice—he may find himself mistaken.”

“My friend seems perfectly confident of the issue of his cause,” answered Jekyl; “but for the lady’s sake, he is most unwilling to prosecute a suit which must be attended with so many circumstances of painful exposure.”

“Exposure, indeed!” answered Tyrrel; “thanks to the traitor who laid a mine so fearful, and who now affects to be reluctant to disclose it.—Oh! how I am bound to curse that affinity that restrains our hands! I would be content to be the meanest and vilest of society for one hour of vengeance on this unexampled hypocrite!—One thing is certain, sir—your friend will have no living victim. His persecutions will kill Clara Mowbray, and fill up the cup of his crimes, with the murder of one of the sweetest—I shall grow a woman, if I say so on the subject!”

“My friend,” said Jekyl, “since you like best to have him so confined, is as desirous as you can be to spare the lady’s feelings; with that view, not reverting to former passages, he has laid before her brother a proposal of alliance, with which Mr Mowbray is highly pleased.”

“Ha!” said Tyrrel, starting—“And the lady?”—

“And the lady so far proved favourable, as to consent that Lord Etherington shall visit Shaws-Castle.”

“Her consent must have been extorted!” exclaimed Tyrrel.

“It was given voluntarily,” said Jekyl, “as I am led to understand, unless, perhaps, in so far as the desire to veil these very unpleasant transactions may have operated, I think, naturally enough, to induce her to sink them in eternal secrecy, by accepting Lord Etherington’s hand.—I see, sir, I give you pain, and am sorry for it.—I have no title to call upon you for any exertion of generosity; but should

Miss Mowbray's sentiments, is it too much to expect of you, that will not compromise the lady's honour by insisting upon former, and opening up disreputable transactions so long past?" Captain Jekyl," said Tyrrel, solemnly, "I have no claims. Never I might have had were cancelled by the act of treachery, through which your friend endeavoured too successfully to supplant. Were Clara Mowbray as free from her pretended marriage as could pronounce her, still with me—*me*, at least of all men in the world—the obstacle must ever remain, that the nuptial benediction been pronounced over her, and the man whom I must for once rather."—He stopped at that word, as if it had cost him agony to pronounce it, and then resumed:—"No, sir, I have no views of personal advantage in this matter—they have been long annihilated. But I will not permit Clara Mowbray to become the wife of a man—I will watch over her with thoughts as spotless as those of a guardian angel. I have been the cause of all the evil she has incurred—I first persuaded her to quit the path of duty—I, of all who live, am bound to protect her from the misery—from the evil which must attach to her as this man's wife. I will never believe that she wishes it—I will never believe that, in calm mind and sober reason, she can be brought to listen to such a guilty proposal. But her mind—alas!—is not of the firm texture it once could boast; your friend knows well how to press on the spring of every passion—that can agitate and alarm her. Threats of exposure may exact her consent to this most unfitting match, if they do not indeed lead her to suicide, which I think the most likely termination. I will therefore, be strong where she is weak.—Your friend, sir, must first strip his proposals of their fine gilding. I will satisfy Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's of his false pretences, both to rank and fortune; and I rather think he will protect his sister against the claim of a needy profligate, though he might be dazzled with the alliance of a wealthy peer."

"Your cause, sir, is not yet won," answered Jekyl; "and when it is, your brother will retain property enough to entitle him to marry a better match than Miss Mowbray, besides the large estate of Woodwood to which that alliance must give him right. But I would be glad to make some accommodation between you, if it were possible. I profess, Mr Tyrrel, to lay aside all selfish wishes and views in this matter, and to look entirely to Miss Mowbray's safety and happiness?" "Such, upon my honour, is the exclusive purpose of my interference—I would give all I am worth to procure her an hour of quiet happiness she will never know again."

"Your anticipations of Miss Mowbray's distress, answered Jekyl, I understand, founded upon the character of my friend. You call him a man of light principle, and because he overreached you in a juvenile intrigue, you conclude that now, in his more steady and matured years, the happiness of the lady in whom you are so much interested ought not to be trusted to him?"

"There may be other grounds," said Tyrrel, hastily; "but you will argue upon those you have named, as sufficient to warrant my interference."

“How, then, if I should propose some accommodation of nature? Lord Etherington does not pretend to the ardour of a sionate lover. He lives much in the world, and has no desire to it. Miss Mowbray’s health is delicate—her spirits variable—and retirement would most probably be her choice—Suppose—I am but putting a supposition—suppose that a marriage between two persons so circumstanced were rendered necessary or advantageous to—suppose that such a marriage were to secure to one party a large estate—were to insure the other against all the consequences of an unpleasant exposure—still, both ends might be obtained by the ceremony of marriage passing between them. There might be a previous contract of separation, with suitable provisions for the wife and stipulations, by which the husband should renounce all claim to her society. Such things happen every season, if not on the marriage day, yet before the honeymoon is over.—Wealth and rank would be the lady’s, and as much rank as you, sir, suppose your claims just, may think proper to leave them.”

There was a long pause, during which Tyrrel underwent many changes of countenance, which Jekyl watched carefully, without pressing him for an answer. At length he replied, “There is nothing in your proposal, Captain Jekyl, which I might be tempted to accept, as one manner of unloosing this Gordian knot, and a compromise by which Miss Mowbray’s future tranquillity would be in a degree provided for. But I would rather trust a fanged adder with your friend, unless I saw him fettered by the strongest ties of affection. Besides, I am certain the unhappy lady could never survive the being connected with him in this manner, though but for a single moment when they should appear together at the altar. There are other objections——”

He checked himself, paused, and then proceeded in a calm self-possessed tone. “You think, perhaps, even yet, that I have some selfish and interested views in this business; and probably you may feel yourself entitled to entertain the same suspicion towards me, which I avowedly harbour respecting every proposition that originates with your friend.—I cannot help it—I can but meet the disadvantageous impressions with plain dealing and honesty; and I am in the spirit of both that *I* make a proposition to *you*.—Your friend is attached to rank, fortune, and worldly advantages, in the usual proportion, at least, in which they are pursued by men of the world—this you must admit, and I will not offend you by supplying more.”

“I know few people who do not desire such advantages,” answered Captain Jekyl; “and I frankly own that he affects no particular degree of philosophic indifference respecting them.”

“Be it so,” answered Tyrrel. “Indeed, the proposal you have made indicates that his pretended claim on this young lady’s hand is entirely, or almost entirely, dictated by motives of interest, since he is of opinion that he would be contented to separate from her society on the very marriage-day, provided that, in doing so, he were assured of the Nettlewood property.”

“My proposition was unauthorised by my principal,” answered

; "but it is needless to deny, that its very tenor implies an on my part, that Lord Etherington is no passionate lover."

"Well then," answered Tyrrel. "Consider, sir, and let him con- well, that the estate and rank he now assumes depend upon ill and pleasure—that, if I prosecute the claims of which that makes you aware, he must descend from the rank of an earl hat of a commoner, stripped of by much the better half of his ne—a diminution which would be far from being compensated a estate of Nettlewood, even if he could obtain it, which could be by means of a lawsuit, precarious in the issue, and most dis- rable in its very essence."

"Well, sir," replied Jekyl, "I perceive your argument—What is proposal?"

hat I will abstain from prosecuting my claim on those honours hat property—that I will leave Valentine Bulmer in possession s usurped title and ill-deserved wealth—that I will bind myself r the strongest penalties never to disturb his possession of the lom of Etherington, and estates belonging to it—on condition ne allows the woman, whose peace of mind he has ruined for to walk through the world in her wretchedness, undisturbed r by his marriage-suit, or by any claim founded upon his own treacherous conduct—in short, that he forbear to molest Clara bray, either by his presence, word, letter, or through the in- tion of a third party, and be to her in future as if he did not "

"This is a singular offer," said the Captain; "may I ask if you erious in making it?"

"I am neither surprised nor offended at the question," said Tyrrel. m a man, sir, like others, and affect no superiority to that which en desire the possession of—a certain consideration and station ciety. I am no romantic fool to undervalue the sacrifice I am t to make. I renounce a rank, which is and ought to be the e valuable to me, because it involves (he blushed as he spoke) ame of an honoured mother—because, in failing to claim it, I ey the commands of a dying father, who wished that by doing should declare to the world the penitence which hurried him ps to the grave, and the making which public he considered t be some atonement for his errors. From an honoured place e land, I descend voluntarily to become a nameless exile; for, certain that Clara Mowbray's peace is assured, Britain no longer me. All this I do, sir, not in any idle strain of overheated feel- out seeing, and knowing, and dearly valuing, every advantage I renounce—yet I do it, and do it willingly, rather than be the of farther evil to one, on whom I have already brought too—uch."

voice, in spite of his exertions, faltered as he concluded the nce, and a big drop which rose in his eye required him for the nt to turn towards the window.

"I am ashamed of this childishness," he said, turning again to in Jekyl; "if it excites your ridicule, sir, let it be at least a of my sincerity."

"I am far from entertaining such sentiments," said Jekyl, respectfully—for, in a long train of fashionable follies, his heart had not been utterly hardened—"very far indeed. To a proposal so singular as yours, I cannot be expected to answer—except thus far—the character of the peerage is, I believe, indelible, and cannot be resigned at pleasure. If you are really Earl of Etherington, I can see how your resigning the right may avail my friend."

"You, sir, it might not avail," said Tyrrel, gravely, "because perhaps, might scorn to exercise a right or hold a title that was legally yours. But your friend will have no such compunctious visitings. If he can act the Earl to the eye of the world, he has already shown that his honour and conscience will be easily satisfied."

"May I take a copy of the memorandum containing this list of documents," said Captain Jekyl, "for the information of my constituent?"

"The paper is at your pleasure, sir," replied Tyrrel; "it is indeed but a copy. But Captain Jekyl," he added, with a sarcastic expression, "is, it would seem, but imperfectly let into his friend's confidence—he may be assured his principal is completely acquainted with the contents of this paper, and has accurate copies of the documents to which it refers."

"I think it scarce possible," said Jekyl, angrily.

"Possible and certain!" answered Tyrrel. "My father, shortly preceding his death, sent me—with a most affecting confession of his errors—this list of papers, and acquainted me that he had made a similar communication to your friend. That he did so I have no doubt, however Mr Bulmer may have thought proper to disguise the circumstance in communication with you. One circumstance, and others, stamps at once his character, and confirms me of the danger he apprehended by my return to Britain. He found means, through a scoundrelly agent, who had made me the usual remittances for my father while alive, to withhold those which were necessary for my return from the Levant, and I was obliged to borrow from my friend."

"Indeed?" replied Jekyl. "It is the first time I have heard of these papers—May I inquire where the originals are, and in whose custody?"

"I was in the East," answered Tyrrel, "during my father's illness, and these papers were by him deposited with a respectable commercial house, with which he was connected. They were enclosed in a cover directed to me, and that again in an envelope, addressed to the principal person in their firm."

"You must be sensible," said Captain Jekyl, "that I can scarcely decide on the extraordinary offer which you have been pleased to make, of resigning the claim founded on these documents, until I had a previous opportunity of examining them."

"You shall have that opportunity—I will write to have them sent down by the post—they lie but in small compass."

"This, then," said the Captain, "sums up all that can be said at present. Supposing these proofs to be of unexceptionable authenticity, I certainly would advise my friend Etherington to put to

him so important as yours, even at the expense of resigning hisrimonial speculation—I presume you design to abide by your?”

“I am not in the habit of altering my mind—still less of retracting word,” said Tyrrel, somewhat haughtily.

“We part friends, I hope?” said Jekyl, rising, and taking his

“Not enemies, certainly, Captain Jekyl. I will own to you I owe my thanks, for extricating me from that foolish affair at the—nothing could have put me to more inconvenience than the ssity of following to extremity a frivolous quarrel at the present ent.”

“You will come down among us, then?” said Jekyl.

“I certainly shall not wish to appear to hide myself,” answered el; “it is a circumstance might be turned against me—there is ty who will avail himself of every advantage. I have but one Captain Jekyl—that of truth and honour.”

Captain Jekyl bowed, and took his leave. So soon as he was gone, el locked the door of the apartment, and drawing from his m a portrait, gazed on it with a mixture of sorrow and tender—until the tears dropped from his eyes.

It was the picture of Clara Mowbray, such as he had known her e days of their youthful love, and taken by himself, whose early for painting had already developed itself. The features of the ning girl might be yet traced in the fine countenance of the e matured original. But what was now become of the glow h had shaded her cheek?—what of the arch, yet subdued plea-ry, which lurked in the eye?—what of the joyous content which posed every feature to the expression of an Euphrosyne?—Alas! e were long fled!—Sorrow had laid his hand upon her—the le light of youth was quenched—the glance of innocent gaiety exchanged for looks now moody with ill-concealed care, now anid by a spirit of reckless and satirical observation.

“What a wreck! what a wreck!” exclaimed Tyrrel; “and all of wretch’s making.—Can I put the last hand to the work, and be murderer outright? I cannot—I cannot! I will be strong in the ve I have formed—I will sacrifice all—rank—station—fortune ame. Revenge!—Revenge itself, the last good left me—revenge I will sacrifice to obtain her such tranquillity as she may be yet ble to enjoy.”

With this resolution he sat down and wrote a letter to the commercial e with whom the documents of his birth, and other relative rs, were deposited, requesting that the packet containing them ld be forwarded to him through the post-office.

Tyrrel was neither unambitious nor without those sentiments re- ing personal consideration, which are usually united with deep ng and an ardent mind. It was with a trembling hand and a ry eye, but with a heart firmly resolved, that he sealed and de- shed the letter; a step towards the resignation, in favour of his al enemy, of that rank and condition in life which was his own ght of inheritance, but had so long hung in doubt betwixt them.

CHAPTER XXX.

INTRUSION.

By my troth, I will go with thee to the lane's-end!—I am a kind of burr—I shall stick.

Measure for Measure.

It was now far advanced in autumn. The dew lay thick on long grass where it was touched by the sun; but where the sward in shadow it was covered with hoar frost, and crisped under Jekyl's foot as he returned through the woods of St Ronan's. The leaves of the ash-trees detached themselves from the branches, and, without an air of wind, fell spontaneously on the path. The mists lay lazily upon the heights, and the huge old tower of St Ronan's entirely shrouded with vapour, except where a sunbeam, struggling with the mist, penetrated into its wreath so far as to show a projecting turret upon one of the angles of the old fortress, which, a favourite haunt of the raven, was popularly called the Corl Tower. Beneath, the scene was open and lightsome, and the robin redbreast was chirping his best, to atone for the absence of all other choristers. The fine foliage of autumn was seen in many a glen running up the sides of each little ravine, russet-hued and gold-specked, and tinged frequently with the red hues of the mountain ash; while here and there a huge old fir, the native growth of the soil, flung his broad shadow over the rest of the trees, and seemed to exult in the permanence of his dusky livery over the more showy and transitory brilliance by which he was surrounded.

Such is the scene which, so often described in prose and in poetry, yet seldom loses its effect upon the ear or upon the eye, and through which we wander with a strain of mind congenial to the decline of the year. There are few who do not feel the impression; and Jekyl, though bred to far different pursuits than those most favourable to such contemplation, relaxed his pace to admire the uncommon beauty of the landscape.

Perhaps, also, he was in no hurry to rejoin the Earl of Etherington, towards whose service he felt himself more disinclined since his interview with Tyrrel. It was clear that that nobleman had not reposed in his friend the confidence promised; he had not made him aware of the existence of those important documents of proof, which the whole fate of his negotiation appeared now to hinge on, in so far as it had deceived him. Yet, when he pulled from his pocket and re-read Lord Etherington's explanatory letter, Jekyl could only help being more sensible than he had been on the first perusal, that much the present possessor of that title felt alarmed at his brother's claims; and he had some compassion for the natural feeling which must have rendered him shy of communicating at once the worst view of his case, even to his most confidential friend. In the whole, he remembered that Lord Etherington had been his

or to an unusual extent; that, in return, he had promised the nobleman his active and devoted assistance, in extricating him from the difficulties with which he seemed at present surrounded; and, in quality of his confidant, he had become acquainted with the secret transactions of his life; and that it could only be some strong cause indeed which could justify breaking off from him at this moment. Yet he could not help wishing either that his own obligations had been less, his friend's cause better, or, at least, that he himself more worthy of assistance.

A beautiful morning, sir, for such a foggy, d—d climate as this," said a voice close by Jekyl's ear, which made him at once start out of his reverie. He turned half round, and beside him stood our old friend Touchwood, his throat muffled in his large Indian handkerchief, huge gouty shoes thrust upon his feet, his bob-wig powdered, and the gold-headed cane in his hand carried upright like a sergeant's halberd. One glance of contemptuous survey entitled Jekyl, according to his modish ideas, to rank the old gentleman as a singular-built quiz, and to treat him as the young gentlemen of his Majesty's Guards think themselves entitled to use every unfashionable variety of the human species. A slight inclination of a bow, and a very cold "You have the advantage of me, sir," dropped as it fell unconsciously from his tongue, were meant to repress the old gentleman's advances, and moderate his ambition to be hail fellow met with his betters. But Mr Touchwood was callous to the rebuke; he had lived too much at large upon the world, and was far too confident of his own merits, to take a repulse easily, or permit his modesty to interfere with any purpose which he had in mind.

"Advantage of you, sir?" he replied; "I have lived too long in the world not to keep all the advantages I have, and get all I can—and reckon it one that I have overtaken you, and shall have the pleasure of your company to the Well."

"I should but interrupt your worthier meditations, sir," said the other; "besides, I am a modest young man, and think myself fit for better company than my own—moreover, I walk slow—very slow: good morning to you, Mr A—A—I believe my treacherous memory has let slip your name, sir."

"My name!—Why, your memory must have been like Pat Murph's greyhound, that let the hare go before he caught it. You never heard my name in your life. Touchwood is my name. What do you think of it, now you know it?"

"I am really no connoisseur in surnames," answered Jekyl; "and it is quite the same to me whether you call yourself Touchwood or Touchstone. Don't let me keep you from walking on, sir. You will find breakfast far advanced at the Well, sir, and your walk has probably given you an appetite."

"Which will serve me to luncheon-time, I promise you," said Touchwood; "I always drink my coffee as soon as my feet are in my gaiters—it's the way all over the East. Never trust my breakfast to their scalding milk-and-water at the Well, I assure you; and walking slow, I have had a touch of the gout."

"Have you?" said Jekyl; "I am sorry for that; because, if you have no mind to breakfast, I have—and so, Mr Touchstone, good-morrow to you."

But although the young soldier went off at double quick time, his pertinacious attendant kept close by his side, displaying an activity which seemed inconsistent with his make and his years, and talking away the whole time, so as to show that his lungs were not in the least degree incommoded by the unusual rapidity of motion.

"Nay, young gentleman, if you are for a good smart walk, I am for you, and the gout may be d—d. You are a lucky fellow to have youth on your side; but yet, so far as between the Aultoun and the Well, I think I could walk you for your sum, barring running—all hand and toe—equal weight, and I would match Barclay himself for a mile."

"Upon my word, you are a gay old gentleman!" said Jekyl, relaxing his pace; "and if we must be fellow-travellers, though I can find no great occasion for it, I must even shorten sail for you."

So saying, and as if another means of deliverance had occurred to him, he slackened his pace, took out a morocco case of cigars, and lighting one with his *briquet*, said, while he walked on, and bestowed as much of its fragrance as he could, upon the face of his intrusive companion, "Vergeben sie, mein herr—ich bin erzogen in kaiserlicher dienst—muss rauchen ein kleine wenig."¹

"Rauchen sie immer fort," said Touchwood, producing a bubble of meerschaum, which, suspended by a chain from his neck, lurked under the bosom of his coat, "habe auch mien pfeichen—Sehen sie die lieben topf!"² and he began to return the smoke, if not the fire, to his companion, in full volumes, and with interest.

"The devil take the twaddle," said Jekyl to himself, "he is too old and too fat to be treated after the manner of Professor Jackson; and on my life, I cannot tell what to make of him.—He is a resident too—I must tip him the cold shoulder, or he will be pestering me eternally."

Accordingly he walked on, sucking his cigar, and apparently in as abstracted a mood as Mr Cargill himself, without paying the least attention to Touchwood, who, nevertheless, continued talking, as if he had been addressing the most attentive listener in Scotland, whether it were the favourite nephew of a cross, old, rich bachelor, or the aide-de-camp of some old rusty firelock of a general, who told the stories of the American war.

"And so, sir, I can put up with any companion at a pinch, for I have travelled in all sort of ways, from a caravan down to a carriage; but the best society is the best everywhere; and I am happy. I have fallen in with a gentleman who suits me so well as you.—The grave, steady attention of yours reminds me of Elfi Bey—you might talk to him in English, or anything he understood least of—might have read Aristotle to Elfi, and not a muscle would he stir to give him his pipe, and he would sit on his cushion with a listless air as if he took in every word of what you said."

¹ Forgive me, sir, I was bred in the Imperial service, and must smoke a little.

² Smoke as much as you please; I have got my pipe too.—See what a beautiful head!

Captain Jekyl threw away the remnant of his cigar, with a little element of pettishness, and began to whistle an opera air.

There again, now!—That is just so like the Marquis of Rocomp—another dear friend of mine, that whistles all the time you talk him—He says he learnt it in the Reign of Terror, when a man glad to whistle to show his throat was whole. And, talking of that folk, what do you think of this affair between Lord Etherington and his brother, or cousin, as some folk call him?"

Jekyl absolutely started at the question; a degree of emotion, had it been witnessed by any of his fashionable friends, would ever have ruined his pretensions to rank in their first order.

"What affair?" he asked, so soon as he could command a certain degree of composure.

"Why, you know the news surely? Francis Tyrrel, whom all the company voted a coward the other day, turns out as brave a fellow as any of us; for, instead of having run away to avoid having his throat cut by Sir Bingo Binks, he was at the very moment engaged in a gallant attempt to murder his elder brother, or his lawful brother, or his cousin, or some such near relation."

"I believe you are misinformed, sir," said Jekyl dryly, and resumed, as deftly as he could, his proper character of a surrante.

"I am told," continued Touchwood, "one Jekyl acted as a second to them both on the occasion—a proper fellow, sir—one of those gentlemen whom we pay for polishing the pavement in Bond Street, and looking at a thick shoe and a pair of worsted stockings while the wearer were none of their paymasters. However, I believe the Commander-in-chief is like to discard him when he hears what happened."

"Sir!" said Jekyl, fiercely—then, recollecting the folly of being quarrelsome with an original of his companion's description, he proceeded more coolly, "You are misinformed—Captain Jekyl knew nothing of any such matter as you refer to—you talk of a person you know nothing of—Captain Jekyl is——" (Here he stopped a little, scandalized, perhaps, at the very idea of vindicating himself to such a purpose from such a charge.)

"Ay, ay," said the traveller, filling up the chasm in his own way, "it is not worth our talking of, certainly—but I believe he knew as much of the matter as either you or I do, for all that."

"Sir, this is either a very great mistake, or wilful impertinence," answered the officer. "However absurd or intrusive you may be, I will not allow you, either in ignorance or incivility, to use the name of Captain Jekyl with disrespect.—I am Captain Jekyl, sir."

"Very like, very like," said Touchwood, with the most provoking deference; "I guessed as much before."

"Then, sir, you may guess what is likely to follow, when a gentleman hears himself unwarrantably and unjustly slandered," replied Captain Jekyl, surprised and provoked that his annunciation of name and rank seemed to be treated so lightly. "I advise you, sir, not to proceed too far upon the immunities of your age and insignificance." "I never presume farther than I have good reason to think neces-

sary, Captain Jekyl," answered Touchwood, with great composure. "I am too old, as you say, for any such idiotical business as a duel, which no nation I know of practises but our silly fools of Europe; and then, as for your switch, which you are grasping with so much dignity, that is totally out of the question. Look you, young gentleman; four-fifths of my life have been spent among men who do not set a man's life at the value of a button on his collar—every person learns, in such cases, to protect himself as he can; and whoever strikes me must stand to the consequences. I have always a brace of bull-dogs about me, which put age and youth on a level. I suppose me horse-whipped, and pray, at the same time, suppose yourself shot through the body. The same exertion of imagination will serve for both purposes."

So saying, he exhibited a very handsome, highly-finished, richly-mounted pair of pistols.

"Catch me without my tools," said he, significantly buttoning his coat over the arms, which were concealed in a side-pocket, ingeniously contrived for that purpose. "I see you do not know what I make of me," he continued, in a familiar and confidential tone. "but, to tell you the truth, everybody that has meddled in this business of Ronan's is a little off the hooks—something of a *tête exotique* in plain words, a little crazy, or so; and I do not affect to be more so than other people."

"Sir," said Jekyl, "your manners and discourse are so unpretending that I must ask your meaning plainly and decidedly—Do you mean to insult me, or no?"

"No insult at all, young gentleman—all fair meaning, and all on board—I only wished to let you know what the world may say, and that is all."

"Sir," said Jekyl, hastily, "the world may tell what lies it pleases, but I was not present at the rencontre between Etherington and Mr Tyrrel—I was some hundred miles off."

"There now," said Touchwood, "there *was* a rencontre between them—the very thing I wanted to know."

"Sir," said Jekyl, aware too late that, in his haste to vindicate himself, he had committed his friend, "I desire you will found your thing on an expression hastily used to vindicate myself from a aspersion—I only meant to say, if there was an affair such as I have just been talking of, I knew nothing of it."

"Never mind—never mind—I shall make no bad use of what I have learned," said Touchwood. "Were you to eat your words like the best fish sauce (and that is Burgess's), I have got all the information from them I wanted."

"You are strangely pertinacious, sir," replied Jekyl.

"Oh, a rock, a piece of flint for that—What I have learned I have learned, but I will make no bad use of it—Hark ye, Captain, I have no malice against your friend—perhaps the contrary—but he has taken a bad course, sir—has kept a false reckoning, for as deep as he thinks himself; and I tell you so, because I hold you (your friend) out of the question) to be, as Hamlet says, indifferent honest; if you were not, why necessity is necessity; and a man will take

tain for his guide in the desert, whom he would not trust with a spear in the cultivated field; so I think of reposing some confidence in you—have not made up my mind yet, though.”

On my word, sir, I am greatly flattered both by your intentions and your hesitation,” said Captain Jekyl. “You were pleased to trust now, that every one concerned with these matters was something particular.”

“Ay, ay—something crazy—a little mad or so. That was what I said, and I can prove it.”

“I should be glad to hear the proof,” said Jekyl—“I hope you do except yourself?”

“Oh! by no means,” answered Touchwood; “I am one of the oldest old boys ever slept out of straw, or went loose. But you put fishing questions in your turn, Captain, I see that—you would fain know how much or how little I am in all these secrets. Well, that is as hereafter may be. In the mean time here are my confessions.—Old Scrogie Mowbray was mad, to like the sound of a raven better than that of Scrogie; young Scrogie was mad, not to take it as well. The old Earl of Etherington was not sane when he married a French wife in secret, and devilish mad indeed when he married an English one in public. Then for the good folk here, the raven of St Ronan’s is cracked, when he wishes to give his sister; she knows not precisely whom; she is a fool not to take him, because she *does* know who he is, and what has been between them; your friend is maddest of all, who seeks her under so heavy a talisman;—and you and I, Captain, go mad gratis, for company’s sake, when we mix ourselves with such a mess of folly and frenzy.”

Really, sir, all that you have said is an absolute riddle to me,” replied the embarrassed Jekyl.

“Riddles may be read,” said Touchwood, nodding; “if you have a desire to read mine, pray take notice, that this being our first interview, I have exerted myself *faire les frais du conversation*, as the Frenchman says; if you want another, you may come to Mrs Dods’s, at the Cleikum Inn, any day before Saturday, at four precisely, when you will find none of your half-starved, long-limbed bundles of bones, which you call poultry at the table-d’hôte, but a right pretty-gong fowl—I got Mrs Dods the breed from old Ben Van-rash, the Dutch broker—stewed to a minute, with rice and mushrooms.—If you can eat without a silver fork, and your appetite serves you, you shall be welcome—that’s all.—So good morning to you, good master lieutenant, for a Captain of the Guards is but a lieutenant after all.”

Not saying, and ere Jekyl could make any answer, the old gentleman turned short off into a path which led to the healing fountain, striding away from that which conducted to the Hotel.

Uncertain with whom he had been holding a conversation so long, Jekyl remained looking after him, until his attention was attracted by a little boy, who crept out from an adjoining thicket, with a witch in his hand, which he had been just cutting,—probably in contravention of regulations to the contrary effect made and provided, for he was himself ready to take cover in the copse again, in case any one

were in sight who might be interested in chastising his delinquency. Captain Jekyl easily recognised in him one of that hopeful class of imps, who pick up a precarious livelihood about places of public resort, by going errands, brushing shoes, doing the groom's and coachman's work in the stables, driving donkeys, opening gates, and so forth, for but one-tenth part of their time, spending the rest of the day in gambling, sleeping in the sun, and otherwise qualifying themselves to exercise the profession of thieves and pickpockets, either separately, or in conjunction with those of waiters, grooms, and porters. The little outcast had an indifferent pair of pantaloons, and about half a jacket, for, like Pentapolin with the naked arm, he went on action with his right shoulder bare; a third part of what had once been a hat covered his hair, bleached white with the sun, and his face as brown as a berry, was illuminated by a pair of eyes which, for spying out either peril or profit, might have rivalled those of the hawk.—In a word, it was the original Puck of the Shakespearean dramaticals.

"Come hither, ye unchanged whelp," said Jekyl, "and tell me if you know the old gentleman that passed down the walk just now; yonder he is, still in sight."

"It is the Nabob," said the boy; "I could swear to his back among all the backs at the Waal, your honour."

"What do you call a Nabob, you varlet?"

"A Nabob—a Nabob?" answered the scout; "odd, I believe, as ane comes frae foreign parts, with mair siller than his pouch can haud, and spills it a' through the country—they are as yell as orangers, and maun hae a' thing their ain gate."

"And what is this Nabob's name, as you call him?" demanded Jekyl.

"His name is Touchwood," said his informer, "ye may see him at the Waal every morning."

"I have not seen him at the ordinary."

"Na, na," answered the boy; "he's a queer auld cull, he does frequent wi' other folk, but lives upby at the Cleikum.—He gave me half-a-crown yince, and forbade me to play it awa' at pitch and toss."

"And you disobeyed him, of course?"

"Na, I didna disobey him—I played it awa' at neevie-neevie nick-nack."

"Well, there is sixpence for thee; lose it to the devil in any way thou think'st proper."

So saying, he gave the little galopin his donative, and a slight tap on the pate at the same time, which sent him scouring from his presence. He himself hastened to Lord Etherington's apartment, and, as luck would have it, found the Earl alone.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCUSSION.

I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys—none are for me
That look into me with suspicious eyes.

Richard III.

How now, Jekyl!" said Lord Etherington, eagerly; "what news of the enemy?—Have you seen him?"

I have," replied Jekyl.

And in what humour did you find him?—in none that was very agreeable, I daresay, for you have a baffled and perplexed look, that betrays a losing game—I have often warned you how your hang-dog look betrays you at brag—And then, when you would fain brush up your courage, and put a good face on a bad game, your bold looks always remind me of a standard hoisted only half-mast high, and saying melancholy and dejection, instead of triumph and defiance." I am only holding the cards for your lordship at present," answered Jekyl; "and I wish to Heaven there may be no one looking over your hand."

How do you mean by that?"

Why, I was beset, on returning through the wood, by an old fellow, a Nabob, as they call him, and Touchwood by name."

I have seen such a quiz about," said Lord Etherington—"What did he say?"

Nothing," answered Jekyl; "except that he seemed to know more of your affairs than you would wish or are aware of. He smoked the truth of the rencontre betwixt Tyrrel and you, and that is worse—I must needs confess the truth—he contrived to wring out of me a sort of confirmation of his suspicions."

'Slife! wert thou mad?" said Lord Etherington, turning pale. "This is the very tongue to send the story through the whole county—Hal, you have undone me."

I hope not," said Jekyl; "I trust in Heaven I have not!—His knowledge is quite general—only that there was some scuffle between you—do not look so dismayed about it, or I will e'en go back and cut his throat, to secure his secrecy."

Cursed indiscretion!" answered the Earl—"how could you let him fix on you at all?"

I cannot tell," said Jekyl—"he has powers of boring beyond the dullness of all possible doctors—stuck like a limpet to a rock—a perfect double of the Old Man of the Sea, who I take to have been the greatest bore on record."

Could you not have turned him on his back like a turtle, and left him there?" said Lord Etherington.

And had an ounce of lead in my body for my pains? No—no

—we have already had footpad work enough—I promise you the buck was armed, as if he meant to bing folks on the low toby.”¹

“Well—well—but Martigny, or Tyrrel, as you call him—w
says he?”

“Why, Tyrrel, or Martigny, as your lordship calls him,” answered Jekyl, “will by no means listen to your lordship’s proposition. I will not consent that Miss Mowbray’s happiness shall be placed in your lordship’s keeping; nay, it did not meet his approbation at the more, when I hinted at the acknowledgment of the marriage, the repetition of the ceremony, attended by an immediate separation, which I thought I might venture to propose.”

“And on what grounds does he refuse so reasonable an accommodation?” said Lord Etherington—“Does he still seek to marry a girl himself?”

“I believe he thinks the circumstances of the case render it impossible,” replied his confidant.

“What? then he would play the dog in the manger,—neither let eat?—He shall find himself mistaken. She has used me like a dog, Jekyl, since I saw you; and, by Jove! I will have her, though it may break her pride, and cut him to the liver with the agony of seeing it.”

“Nay, but hold—hold!” said Jekyl; “perhaps I have something to say on his part that may be a better compromise than all you could have by teasing him. He is willing to purchase what he calls Miss Mowbray’s tranquillity at the expense of his resignation of his claim to your father’s honours and estate; and he surprised me very much, my lord, by showing me this list of documents, which, I am afraid, makes his success more than probable, if there really are such papers in existence.” Lord Etherington took the paper, and seemed to read with much attention, while Jekyl proceeded,—“He has written to procure these evidences from the person with whom they are deposited.”

“We shall see what like they are when they arrive,” said Lord Etherington; “they come by post, I suppose?”

“Yes; and may be immediately expected,” said Jekyl.

“Well—he is my brother on one side of the house at least,” said Lord Etherington; “and I should not much like to have him lagged for forgery, which I suppose will be the end of his bolstering up his unsubstantial plea by fabricated documents—I should like to see these papers he talks of.”

“But, my lord,” replied Jekyl, “Tyrrel’s allegation is, that *he* have seen them; and that copies, at least, were made out for him, and are in your possession—such is his averment.”

“He lies,” answered Lord Etherington, “so far as he pretends to know of such papers. I consider the whole story as froth—foam—fudge, or whatever is most unsubstantial. It will prove such when the papers appear, if indeed they ever will appear. The whole is a bully from beginning to end; and I wonder at thee, Jekyl, for being so thirsty after syllabub, that you can swallow such whipt cream as

¹ “Rob as a footpad.”

amounts to. No, no—I know my advantage, and shall use it so to make all their hearts bleed. As for these papers, I recollect that my agent talked of copies of some manuscripts having been sent him, but the originals were not then forthcoming; and I'll bet on long odds that they never are—mere fabrications—if I thought otherwise, would I not tell you?"

Certainly, I hope you would, my lord," said Jekyl; for I see no use of my being useful to you, unless I have the honour to enjoy your confidence."

You do—you do, my friend," said Etherington, shaking him by the hand; "and since I must consider your present negotiation as a bad one, I must devise some other mode of settling with this mad and troublesome fellow."

No violence, my lord," said Jekyl, once more, and with much emphasis.

None—none—none, by Heaven!—Why, thou suspicious wretch, do I swear, to quell your scruples? On the contrary, it shall not be your fault, if we are not on decent terms."

It would be infinitely to the advantage of both your characters if you could bring that to pass," answered Jekyl; "and if you are anxious in wishing it, I will endeavour to prepare Tyrrel. He comes to the Well or to the ordinary to-day, and it would be highly ridiculous to make a scene."

True, true; find him out, my dear Jekyl, and persuade him how much it will be to bring our family quarrels out before strangers, for their amusement. They shall see the two bears can meet out biting.—Go—go—I will follow you instantly—go, and remember you have my full and exclusive confidence.—Go, half-bred, meddling fool!" he continued, the instant Jekyl had left the room, with just spirits enough to insure your own ruin, by hurrying you to do what you are not up to. But he has character in the world—is respected—and one of those whose countenance gives a fair face to a doubtful business. He is my creature, too—I have bought and paid for him, and it would be idle extravagance not to make use of him—as to confidence—no confidence, honest Hal, beyond that which cannot be avoided. If I wanted a confidant, here comes a better than thou by half—Solmes has no scruples—he will always give me the best of his worth of zeal and secrecy *for* money."

His lordship's valet at this moment entered the apartment, a grave, middle-aged man, past the middle age, with a sallow complexion, a thoughtful eye, slow, and sparing of speech, and sedulously attentive to all the duties of his situation.

Solmes," said Lord Etherington, and then stopped short.

My lord,"—There was a pause; and when Lord Etherington had again said, "Solmes!" and his valet had answered, "Your lordship," there was a second pause; until the Earl, as if recollecting himself, said, "I remember what I wished to say—it was about the course of business here. It is not very regular, I believe?"

Regular enough, my lord, so far as concerns this place—the clerks in the Aultoun do not get their letters in course."

And why not, Solmes?" said his lordship.

"The old woman who keeps the little inn there, my lord, is on terms with the post-mistress—the one will not send for the letter, and the other will not despatch them to the village; so, between them, they are sometimes lost, or mislaid, or returned to the General Post-office."

"I wish that may not be the case of a packet which I expect a few days—it should have been here already, or perhaps it may arrive in the beginning of the week—it is from that formal ass, Truer the quaker, who addresses me by my Christian and family name, Francis Tyrrel. He is like enough to mistake the inn, too, and should be sorry it fell into Monsieur Martigny's hands—I suppose you know he is in that neighbourhood?—Look after its safety, Solmes—quietly, you understand; because people might put odd constructions, as if I were wanting a letter which was not my own."

"I understand perfectly, my lord," said Solmes, without exhibiting the slightest change in his sallow countenance, though perfectly comprehending the nature of the service required.

"And here is a note will pay for postage," said the Earl, putting into his valet's hand a bank-bill of considerable value; "and may keep the balance for occasional expenses."

This was also fully understood; and Solmes, too politic and cautious even to look intelligence, or acknowledge gratitude, made only a bow of acquiescence, put the note into his pocket-book, and assured his lordship that his commands should be punctually attended to.

"There goes the agent for my money, and for my purpose," said Lord Etherington, exultingly; "no extorting of confidence, no demanding of explanations, no tearing off the veil with which a delicate manœuvre is *gazé*—all excuses are received as *argent comptant*, provided only that the best excuse of all, the *argent comptant* itself, come to recommend them.—Yet I will trust no one—I will out, I am a skilful general, and reconnoitre in person."

With this resolution, Lord Etherington put on his surtout and sallied from his apartments, took the way to the bookseller's shop, which also served as post-office and circulating library; being in the very centre of the parade (for so is termed the broad terrace walk which leads from the inn to the Well), it formed a convenient lounging-place for news-mongers and idlers of every description.

The Earl's appearance created, as usual, a sensation upon the public promenade; but whether it was the suggestion of his alarmed conscience, or that there was some real cause for the remark, he could not help thinking his reception was of a more doubtful character than usual. His fine figure and easy manners produced their usual effect, and all whom he spoke to received his attention with honour; but none offered, as usual, to unite themselves to him, or induce him to join their party. He seemed to be looked on rather as an object of observation and attention, than as making one of the company; and to escape from a distant gaze, which became rather embarrassing, he turned into the little emporium of news and literature.

He entered unobserved, just as Lady Penelope had finished

some verses, and was commenting upon them with all the alacrity *femme savante*, in possession of something which no one is to repeated oftener than once.

Copy—no indeed!" these were the snatches which reached Lord Etherington's ear, from the group of which her ladyship formed the re—"honour bright—I must not betray poor Chatterly—besides, lordship is my friend, and a person of rank, you know—so one did not—You have not got the book, Mr Pott?—you have not got us?—you never have anything one longs to see."

Very sorry, my lady—quite out of copies at present—I expect in my next monthly parcel."

Good luck, Mr Pott, that is your never-failing answer," said Lady Penelope; "I believe if I were to ask you for the last new copy of the Alkoran, you would tell me it was coming down in your next monthly parcel."

Can't say, my lady, really," answered Mr Pott; "have not seen any new work advertised yet; but I have no doubt, if it is likely to take, there will be copies in my next monthly parcel."

Mr Pott's supplies are always in the *paullo post futurum tense*," said Mr Chatterly, who was just entering the shop.

Ah! Mr Chatterly, are you there?" said Lady Penelope; "I lay my hand at your door—I cannot find this Thebaid, where Polynices and his brother——"

Hush, my lady!—hush, for Heaven's sake!" said the poetical lord, and looked towards Lord Etherington. Lady Penelope took the hint, and was silent; but she had said enough to call up the teller Touchwood, who raised his head from the newspaper which he was studying, and without addressing his discourse to any one in particular, ejaculated, as if in scorn of Lady Penelope's geography—Polynices?—Polly Peachum.—There is no such place in the world—the Thebais is in Egypt—the mummies come from the Thebais—I have been in the catacombs—caves very curious indeed—where were lapidated by the natives—pebbled to some purpose, I give you my word. My janizary thrashed a whole village by way of retaliation."

While he was thus proceeding, Lord Etherington, as if in a listless mood, was looking at the letters which stood ranged on the chimney-piece, and carrying on a languid dialogue with Mrs Pott, whose person and manners were not ill adapted to her situation, for she was good-looking, and vastly fine and affected.

Number of letters here which don't seem to find owners, Mrs Pott?"

Great number, indeed, my lord—it is a great vexation, for we are obliged to return them to the post-office, and the postage is charged against us if they are lost; and how can one keep sight of them all?"

Any love-letters among them, Mrs Pott?" said his lordship, in a low, serious tone.

Oh, fie! my lord, how should I know?" answered Mrs Pott, keeping her voice to the same cadence.

Oh! every one can tell a love-letter—that has ever received one,

that is—one knows them without opening—they are always folded hurriedly and sealed carefully—and the direction manifests a kind of tremulous agitation, that marks the state of the writer's nerve at that now,"—pointing with his switch to a letter upon the chimney-piece, "that *must* be a love-letter."

"He, he, he!" giggled Mrs Pott. "I beg pardon for laughing my lord—but—he, he, he!—that is a letter from one Bindloose, a banker body, to the old woman, Luckie Dods, as they call her, at the change-house in the Aultoun."

"Depend upon it, then, Mrs Pott, that your neighbour, Mrs Dods has got a lover in Mr Bindloose—unless the banker has been shaking hands with the palsy. Why do you not forward her letter?—you are very cruel to keep it in durance here."

"Me forward!" answered Mrs Pott; "the capernoity, old, girth-alewife may wait long enough or I forward it—She'll not lose letters that come to her by the King's post, and she must go troking wi' the old carrier, as if there was no post-house in the neighbourhood. But the solicitor will be about wi' her one of these days."

"Oh! you are too cruel—you really should send the love-letter, consider, the older she is the poor soul has the less time to lose."

But this was a topic on which Mrs Pott understood no jesting. She was well aware of our matron's inveteracy against her and the establishment, and she resented it as a placeman resents the efforts of a radical. She answered something sulkily, "That they loose letters should have letters; and neither Luckie Dods nor any of her lodgers should ever see the scrape of a pen from the St Ronan's office, that they did not call for and pay for."

It is probable that this declaration contained the essence of the information which Lord Etherington had designed to extract by his momentary flirtation with Mrs Pott, for when, retreating as it were from this sore subject, she asked him, in a pretty mincing tone to try his skill in pointing out another love-letter, he only answered carelessly, "that in order to do that he must write her one;"—leaving his confidential station by her little throne, he lounged through the narrow shop, bowed slightly to Lady Penelope as he passed, and issued forth upon the parade, where he saw a spectacle which must have appalled a man of less self-possession than himself.

Just as he left the shop little Miss Digges entered, almost breathless with the emotion of impatience and of curiosity, "Oh la! my lady, what do you stay here for?—Mr Tyrrel has just entered the other end of the parade this moment, and Lord Etherington is waiting that way—they must meet each other.—O Lord! come, come away, and see them meet!—I wonder if they'll speak—I hope they won't fight—Oh la! do come, my lady!"

"I must go with you, I find," said Lady Penelope; "it is the strangest thing, my love, that curiosity of yours about other people's matters—I wonder what your mamma will say to it."

"Oh! never mind mamma—nobody minds her—papa, nor no!—Do come, dearest Lady Pen, or I will run away by myself.—Chatterly, do make her come!"

must come, it seems," said Lady Penelope, "or I shall have a y account of you."

it, notwithstanding this rebuke, and forgetting at the same time people of quality ought never to seem in a hurry, Lady Penelope, such of her satellites as she could hastily collect around her, ed along the parade with unusual haste, in sympathy, doubtless, Miss Digges's curiosity, as her ladyship declared she had none er own.

ur friend, the traveller, had also caught up Miss Digges's infor-on; and, breaking off abruptly an account of the Great Pyramid, h had been naturally introduced by the mention of the Thebais, echoing the fair alarmist's words, "hope they won't fight," he ed upon the parade, and bustled along as hard as his sturdy sup-ers could carry him. If the gravity of the traveller, and the deli-of Lady Penelope, were surprised into unwonted haste from their rness to witness the meeting of Tyrrel and Lord Etherington, it be well supposed that the decorum of the rest of the company a slender restraint on their curiosity, and that they hurried to be ent at the expected scene with the alacrity of gentlemen of the y hastening to a set-to.

truth, though the meeting afforded little sport to those who ex-ed dire conclusions, it was, nevertheless, sufficiently interesting ose spectators who are accustomed to read the language of sup-posed passion, betraying itself at the moment when the parties are desirous to conceal it.

yrrel had been followed by several loiterers so soon as he entered public walk; and their number was now so much reinforced, that w himself with pain and displeasure the centre of a sort of crowd watched his motions. Sir Bingo and Captain MacTurk were first to bustle through it, and to address him with as much polite-as they could command.

Servant, sir," mumbled Sir Bingo, extending the right hand ellowship and reconciliation, ungloved. "Servant—sorry that hing should have happened between us—very sorry, on my word." No more need be said, sir," replied Tyrrel; "the whole is for-en."

Very handsome, indeed—quite the civil thing—hope to meet you n, sir."—And here the knight was silent.

eanwhile, the more verbose Captain proceeded, "Och, py Cot, it was an awfu' mistake, and I could draw the penknife across inger for having written the word.—By my sowl, and I scratched l I scratched a hole in the paper.—Och! that I should live to do uncivil thing by a gentleman that had got himself hit in an hon-ble affair! But you should have written, my dear; for how the l could we guess that you were so well provided in quarrels that had to settle two in one day?"

I was hurt in an unexpected—an accidental manner, Captain Turk. I did not write, because there was something in my cir-stances at the moment which required secresy; but I was red-ed, the instant I recovered, to put myself to rights in your good ion."

“Och! and you have done that,” said the Captain, nodding significantly; “for Captain Jekyl, who is a fine child, has put us all up to your honourable conduct. They are pretty boys, these guardsmen, though they may play a little fine sometimes, and think more of themselves than peradventure they need for to do, in comparison with the line.—But he let us know all about it—and, though he said not a word of a certain fine lord, with his footpad, and his hurt, what not, yet we all knew how to lay that and that together.—if the law would not right you, and there were bad words between you, why should not two gentlemen right themselves? And as for your being kinsmen, why should not kinsmen behave to each other like men of honour? Only, some say you are father’s sons, and that is something too near. I had once thoughts of calling out my uncle Dougal myself, for there is no saying where the line should be drawn; but I thought, on the whole, there should be no fighting there, is no marriage, within the forbidden degrees. As for cousins—Wheugh!—that’s all fair—fire away, Flanigan!—But I am your lord, just upon us, like a stag of the first head, and the whole herd behind him.”

Tyrrel stepped forward a little before his officious companions, whose complexion rapidly changing into various shades, like that of a man who forces himself to approach and touch some animal or reptile which he entertains that deep disgust and abhorrence which is so anciently ascribed to constitutional antipathy. This appearance of constraint put upon himself, with the changes which it produced on his face, was calculated to prejudice him somewhat in the opinion of the spectators, when compared with the steady, stately, yet, at the same time, easy demeanour of the Earl of Etherington, who was equal to any man in England in the difficult art of putting a good countenance on a bad cause. He met Tyrrel with an air as unbarrased as it was cold; and, while he paid the courtesy of a formal and distant salutation, he said aloud, “I presume, Mr Tyrrel, that, since you have not thought fit to avoid this awkward meeting, you are disposed to remember our family connection so as to avoid making sport for the good company?”

“You have nothing to apprehend from my passion, Mr Bulmer,” replied Tyrrel, “if you can assure yourself against the consequences of your own.”

“I am glad of that,” said the Earl, with the same composure, sinking his voice so as only to be heard by Tyrrel; “and as we are not again in a hurry hold any communication together, I take my freedom to remind you that I sent you a proposal of accommodation by my friend, Mr Jekyl.”

“It was inadmissible,” said Tyrrel—“altogether inadmissible both from reasons which you may guess, and others which it is needless to detail.—I sent you a proposition, think of it well.”

“I will,” replied Lord Etherington, when I shall see it supported by those alleged proofs, which I do not believe ever had existence.”

“Your conscience holds another language from your tongue,” said Tyrrel; “but I disclaim reproaches, and decline altercation.”

I let Captain Jekyl know when I have received the papers, and, you say, are essential to your forming an opinion on my proposal. In the meanwhile do not think to deceive me. I am for the very purpose of watching and defeating your machinations; and, while I live, be assured they shall never succeed. And, sir—or my lord—for the titles are in your choice—fare you

"Told a little," said Lord Etherington. "Since we are condemned to look each other's eyes, it is fit the good company should know they are to think of us. You are a philosopher, and do not take the opinion of the public—a poor worldling like me is desirous to be fair with it. Gentlemen," he continued, raising his voice, "Winterblossom, Captain MacTurk, Mr—what is his name, I?—Ay, Micklehen—You have, I believe, all some notion that this gentleman, my near relation, and I have some undecided claims on each other, which prevent our living upon good terms. We do mean, however, to disturb you with our family quarrels; and, for our own part, while this gentleman, Mr Tyrrel, or whatever he may be, to call himself, remains a member of this company, my behaviour to him will be the same as to any stranger who may have an advantage.—Good morrow to you, sir. Good morning, gentlemen—we all meet at dinner, as usual.—Come, Jekyl."

Saying, he took Jekyl by the arm, and, gently extricating him from the sort of crowd, walked off, leaving most of the company possessed in his favour, by the ease and apparent reasonableness of his demeanour. Sounds of depreciation, forming themselves instinctively into something like the words, "my eye, and Betty Martin," issued from the neckcloth of Sir Bingo, but they were not much added to; for it had not escaped the observation of the quick-eyed gentry at the Well, that the Baronet's feelings towards the Earl were in the inverse ratio of those displayed by Lady Ursula, and that, though ashamed to testify, or perhaps incapable of doing, any anxious degree of jealousy, his temper had been for some time considerably upon the fret; a circumstance concerning which his fair moiety did not think it necessary to give herself any concern.

In the meanwhile the Earl of Etherington walked onward with his countenance, in the full triumph of successful genius.

"You see," he said, "Jekyl, that I can turn a corner with any man in England. It was a proper blunder of yours, that you must create the fellow from the mist which accident had flung around you—you might as well have published the story of our rencontre at once, for every one can guess it by laying time, place, and circumstance together; but never trouble your brains for a justification. I marked how I assumed my natural superiority over him—towering up in the full pride of legitimacy—silenced him, even where the company most do congregate. This will go to Mowbray through the agent, and will put him still madder on my alliance. I know he is jealous on my flirtation with a certain lady—the dasher yonder—nothing makes a man sensible of the value of an opportunity, but the chance of losing it."

"I wish to Heaven you would give up thoughts of Miss Mowbray," said Jekyl; "and take Tyrrel's offer, if he has the means of making it good."

"Ay, if—if. But I am quite sure he has no such rights as he pretends to, and that his papers are all a deception.—Why do you put your eye upon me as fixed as if you were searching out some wonderful secret?"

"I wish I knew what to think of your real *bond fide* belief respecting these documents," said Jekyl, not a little puzzled by the steady and unembarrassed air of his friend.

"Why, thou most suspicious of coxcombs," said Etherington, "what the devil would you have me say to you?—Can I, as the lawyers say, prove a negative? or, is it not very possible, that such things may exist, though I have never seen or heard of them? All I can say is, that of all men I am the most interested to detect the existence of such documents; and, therefore, certainly will not admit of it, unless I am compelled to do so by their being produced; nor then either, unless I am at the same time well assured of their authenticity."

"I cannot blame you for your being hard of faith, my lord," said Jekyl; "but still I think if you can cut out with your earldom, and your noble hereditary estate, I would, in your case, pitch Nettlesome to the devil."

"Yes, as you pitched your own patrimony, Jekyl; but you took care to have the spending of it first. What would *you* give for such an opportunity of piecing your fortunes by marriage?—Confess the truth."

"I might be tempted, perhaps," said Jekyl, "in my present circumstances; but if they were what they have been, I should despise an estate that was to be held by petticoat tenure, especially when the lady of the manor was a sickly fantastic girl, that hated me, as Miss Mowbray has the bad taste to hate you."

"Umph—sickly?—no, no, she is not sickly—she is as healthy as any one in constitution—and, on my word, I think her paleness only renders her more interesting. The last time I saw her, I thought she might have rivalled one of Canova's finest statues."

"Yes; but she is indifferent to you—you do not love her," said Jekyl.

"She is anything but indifferent to me," said the Earl; "she comes daily more interesting—for her dislike piques me; and besides she has the insolence openly to defy and contemn me before my brother, and in the eyes of all the world. I have a kind of love-hatred—a sort of hating love for her; in short, thinking upon her is like trying to read a riddle, and makes one make quite as many blunders, and talk just as much nonsense. If ever I have the opportunity, I will make her pay for all her airs."

"What airs?" said Jekyl.

"Nay, the devil may describe them, for I cannot; but, for example, Since her brother has insisted on her receiving me, or I should rather say, on her appearing when I visit Shaws-Castle, one would think her invention has toiled in discovering different ways of showing

of respect to me, and dislike to my presence. Instead of dressing herself as a lady should, especially on such occasions, she chooses the fantastic, or old-fashioned, or negligent bedizening, which makes her at least look odd, if it cannot make her ridiculous—such as the tiaras of various-coloured gauze on her head—such pieces of tapestry, I think, instead of shawls and pelisses—such thick-laced shoes—such tan-leather gloves—mercy upon us, Hal, the very sight of her equipment would drive mad a whole conclave of milliners! Then her postures are so strange—she does so stoop and p, as the women call it, so cross her legs and square her arms—the goddess of grace to look down on her, it would put her to rest for ever!”

And you are willing to make this awkward, ill-dressed, unmanly, dowdy, your Countess, Etherington; you, for whose critical half the town dress themselves?” said Jekyl.

It is all a trick, Hal—all an assumed character to get rid of me, disgust me, to baffle me; but I am not to be had so easily. The Countess is driven to despair—he bites his nails, winks, coughs, makes faces, which she always takes up at cross-purpose. I hope he beats himself after I go away; there would be a touch of consolation, were it not certain of that.”

A very charitable hope, truly, and your present feelings might lead the lady to judge what she may expect after wedlock. But,” said Jekyl, “cannot you, so skilful in fathoming every mood of the female mind, divine some mode of engaging her in conversation?”

Conversation!” replied the Earl; “why, ever since the shock of her first appearance was surmounted, she has contrived to vote me a great entity; and that she may annihilate me completely, she has chosen, of all occupations, that of working a stocking! From what I have heard of old antedeluvian, who lived before the invention of spinning-machines, she learned this craft, Heaven only knows; but there she sits with her work pinned to her knee—not the pretty taper silk stocking, with which Jeanette of Amiens coquetted, while Tristram Remy was observing her progress; but a huge worsted bag, decreed for some flat-footed old pauper, with heels like an elephant—there she squats, counting all the stitches as she works, and refusing to speak or listen, or look up, under pretence that it disturbs her calculation!”

An elegant occupation, truly, and I wonder it does not work a great deal upon her noble admirer,” said Jekyl.

Confound her—no—she shall not trick me. And then, amid this imitation of vulgar stolidity, there break out such sparkles of exultation, when she thinks she has succeeded in baffling her brother, or in plaguing me, that, by my faith, Hal, I could not tell, were it my option, whether to kiss or to cuff her.”

You are determined to go on with this strange affair, then?” said Jekyl.

On—on—on, my boy!—Clara and Nettlewood for ever!” answered the Earl. “Besides, this brother of hers provokes me too—he does not do for me half what he might—what he ought to, do. He stands on point of honour, forsooth, this broken-down horse-

jockey, who swallowed my two thousand pounds as a pointer w a pat of butter. I can see he wishes to play fast and loose—some suspicions, like you, Hal, upon the strength of my right to father's titles and estate, as if with the tithe of the Nettlewood perty alone I would not be too good a match for one of his begg family?—He must scheme, forsooth, this half-baked Scotch cal He must hold off and on, and be cautious, and wait the result, try conclusions with me, this lump of oatmeal dough!—I am n tempted to make an example of him in the course of my proceeding

“Why, this is vengeance horrible and dire,” said Jekyl; “y give up the brother to you; he is a conceited coxcomb, and dese a lesson. But I would fain intercede for the sister.”

“We shall see,” replied the Earl; “and then suddenly, “I tell what it is, Hal; her caprices are so diverting, that I sometimes t out of mere contradiction, I almost love her; at least, if she w but clear old scores, and forget one unlucky prank of mine, it sh be her own fault if I did not make her a happy woman.”

CHAPTER XXXII.

A DEATH-BED.

It comes—it wrings me in my parting hour,
The long-hid crime—the well-disguised guilt,
Bring me some holy priest to lay the spectre!

Old Play.

THE general expectation of the company had been disappointed by the pacific termination of the meeting betwixt the Earl of Etherington and Tyrrel, the anticipation of which had created so deep sensation. It had been expected that some appalling scene would have taken place; instead of which each party seemed to acquiesce in a sullen neutrality, and leave the war to be carried on by the lawyers. It was generally understood that the cause was removed out of the courts of Belona into that of Themis; and although the litigants continued to inhabit the same neighbourhood, and once or twice met at the public walks or public table, they took no notice of each other, farther than by exchanging on such occasions a glance and distant bow.

In the course of two or three days people ceased to take interest in a feud so coldly conducted; and if they thought of it at all, it was but to wonder that both the parties should persevere in residing near the Spaw, and in chilling, with their unsocial behaviour, a party together for the purposes of health and amusement.

But the brothers, as the reader is aware, however painful the occasional meetings might be, had the strongest reasons to remain in each other's neighbourhood—Lord Etherington to conduct his design upon Miss Mowbray, Tyrrel to disconcert his plan, if possible.

and both to await the answer which should be returned by the Earl in London, who were depositaries of the papers left by the Earl.

Kyl, anxious to assist his friend as much as possible, made in the time a visit to old Touchwood at the Aultoun, expecting to find him as communicative as he had formerly been on the subject of the quarrel betwixt the brothers, and trusting to discover, by dint of address, whence he had derived his information concerning the affairs of the noble house of Etherington. But the confidence which Touchwood had been induced to expect on the part of the old traveller was disappointed. Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, as the Earl called him, had deceived his mind, or was not in the vein of communication. The only proof of his confidence worth mentioning was his imparting to the young officer a valuable receipt for concocting curry-powder.

Kyl was therefore reduced to believe that Touchwood, who applied all his life to be a great intermeddler in other people's matters, had puzzled out the information which he appeared to possess of Etherington's affairs, through some of those obscure sources which are very important secrets do frequently, to the astonishment and confusion of those whom they concern, escape to the public. He thought this the more likely, as Touchwood was by no means critical in his society, but was observed to converse as readily with the butler as with the gentleman, as with the gentleman to whom he belonged, and with a lady's attendant as with the lady herself. He that is so at home in this sort of society, who is fond of tattle, being at the same time disposed to pay some consideration for gratification of his vanity, and not over-scrupulous respecting its accuracy, may easily command a great quantity of private anecdote. Captain Kyl naturally enough concluded, that this busy old man became in due degree master of other people's affairs by such correspondences; and he could himself bear witness to his success in cross-examination, as he had been surprised into an avowal of the rencontre between the brothers by an insidious observation of the said Touchwood. He reported, therefore, to the Earl, after this interview, that, on the whole, he thought he had no reason to fear much on the subject of the traveller, who, though he had become acquainted, by some means or other, with some leading facts of his remarkable history, had possessed them in a broken, confused, and desultory manner, such that he seemed to doubt whether the parties in the extended lawsuit were brothers or cousins, and appeared totally ignorant of the facts on which it was to be founded.

On the next day after this *eclaircissement* on the subject of Touchwood that Lord Etherington dropped as usual into the bookseller's shop, got his papers, and skimming his eye over the shelf on which they lay, till called for, the postponed letters, destined for the young man, saw with a beating heart the smart post-mistress toss up against them, with an air of sovereign contempt, a pretty large letter addressed to Francis Tyrrel, Esq. &c. He withdrew his hand as if conscious that even to have looked on this important letter might engender some suspicion of his purpose, or intimate a deep interest which he took in the contents of the missive which

was so slightly treated by his friend Mrs Pott. At this moment door of the shop opened, and Lady Penelope Penfeather entered with her eternal *pendante*, the little Miss Digges.

"Have you seen Mr Mowbray?—Has Mr Mowbray of St Ronan been down this morning?—Do you know anything of Mr Mowbray, Mrs Pott?" were questions which the lettered lady eagerly huddled on the back of each other, scarcely giving time to the lady of letters to return a decided negative to all and each of them.

"Mr Mowbray was not about—was not coming there this morning—his servant had just called for letters and papers, and announced as much."

"Good Heaven! how unfortunate!" said Lady Penelope, with a deep sigh, and sinking down on one of the little sofas in an attitude of shocking desolation, which called the instant attention of Mr Etherington and his good woman, the first uncorking a small phial of salts, for Mr Etherington was a pharmacopolist as well as a vendor of literature and transmission of letters, and the other hastening for a glass of water. A strong temptation thrilled from Lord Etherington's eyes to his finger-end of the watched packet, on the contents of which, in all probability, rested the hope and claims of his rival in honour and fortune; and, in the general confusion, was it impossible to possess himself of it unserved? But no—no—no—the attempt was too dreadfully dangerous to be risked; and, passing from one extreme to another, he behaved as if he was incurring suspicion by suffering Lady Penelope to take off her airs of affected distress and anxiety, without seeming to take that interest in them which her rank at least might be supposed to demand. Stung with this apprehension, he hastened to express himself so anxiously on the subject, and to demonstrate so busily his wish to assist her ladyship, that he presently stood committed a great deal farther than he had intended. Lady Penelope was infinitely obliged to his lordship—indeed it was her character in general to permit herself to be overcome by circumstances; but something had happened, so strange, so embarrassing, so melancholy, that she owned it had quite overcome her—notwithstanding, she had at times piqued herself on supporting her own distresses, better than she was able to suppress her emotions in viewing those of others.

"Could he be of any use?" Lord Etherington asked. "She has inquired for Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's—his servant was at her ladyship's service, if she chose to send to command his attendance."

"Oh! no, no!" said Lady Penelope; "I daresay, my dear Mr Etherington, you will answer the purpose a great deal better than Mr Mowbray—that is, provided you are a Justice of Peace."

"A Justice of Peace!" said Lord Etherington, much surprised. "I am in the commission unquestionably, but not for any Scotch county."

"Oh, that does not signify," said Lady Penelope; "and if you will trust yourself with me a little way, I will explain to you how you may do one of the most charitable, and kind, and generous things in the world."

Lord Etherington's delight in the exercise of charity, kind

generosity, was not so exuberant as to prevent his devising some means for evading Lady Penelope's request, when, looking through the back-door, he had a distant glance of his servant Solmes approaching the Post-office.

He had heard of a sheep-stealer who had rendered his dog so skilful a accomplice in his nefarious traffic, that he used to send him out to commit acts of felony by himself, and had even contrived to impose on the poor cur the caution that he should not, on such occasions, seem even to recognise his master, if they met accidentally.¹ Presently, Lord Etherington conducted himself upon a similar principle; for he had no sooner a glimpse of his agent than he seemed to feel the necessity of leaving the stage free for his machinations. "My servant," he said, with as much indifference as he could assume, "will call for my letters—I must attend Lady Penelope;" and, without further proffering his services as Justice of the Peace, or in whatever other quality she chose to employ them, he hastily presented his hand, and scarce gave her ladyship time to recover from her state of inactivity to the necessary degree of activity, ere he hurried her from the room; and, with her thin hatchet-face chattering close to his ear, his yellow and scarlet feathers crossing his nose, her lean right arm hooked round his elbow, he braved the suppressed titters and sneers of all the younger women whom he met as they traversed the parade. One glance of intelligence, though shot at a distance, was directed betwixt his lordship and Solmes, as the former left the public room under the guidance of Lady Penelope, his limbs indeed obeying her pleasure, and his ears dinning with her attempts to explain the business in question, but his mind totally indifferent where he was going, or ignorant on what purpose, and exclusively occupied with the packet in Mrs Pott's heap of postponed letters, and its probable

length, an effort of recollection made Lord Etherington sensible that his abstraction must seem strange, and, as his conscience told him even suspicious, in the eyes of his companion; putting therefore the necessary degree of constraint upon himself, he expressed, for the first time, curiosity to know where their walk was to terminate. He fancied that this was precisely the question which he needed not have asked, if he had paid but the slightest attention to the very plain communications of her ladyship, which had all turned upon the subject.

"Now, my dear lord," she said, "I must believe your lords of the manor think us poor simple women the vainest fools alive. I have told you how much pain it costs me to speak about my little chariot, and yet you come to make me tell you the whole story over again. But I hope, after all, your lordship is not surprised at what I have thought it my duty to do in this sad affair—perhaps I have yielded too much to the dictates of my own heart, which are apt to be deceitful."

She gave him the watch to get at something explanatory, yet afraid, by doing it directly, to show that the previous tide of narrative and

¹ See Note F. *Dogs trained to theft.*

pathos had been lost on an inattentive ear, Lord Etherington could only say, that Lady Penelope could not err in acting according to the dictates of her own judgment.

Still the compliment had not sauce enough for the lady's satiate palate; so, like a true glutton of praise, she began to help herself with the soup-ladle.

"Ah! judgment?—how is it you men know us so little, that you think we can pause to weigh sentiment in the balance of judgment—that is expecting rather too much from us poor victims of our feelings. So that you must really hold me excused if I forgot the error of this guilty and unhappy creature, when I looked upon her wretchedness—Not that I would have my little friend, Miss Digges, your lordship, suppose that I am capable of palliating the fault, when I pity the poor, miserable sinner. Oh, no—Walpole's verses express beautifully what one ought to feel on such occasions—

‘ For never was the gentle breast
Insensible to human woes ;
Feeling, though firm, it melts distress'd
For weaknesses it never knows.’ ”

"Most accursed of all *précieuses*," thought his lordship, "wilt thou, amidst all thy chatter, utter one word sounding like sense or information?"

But Lady Penelope went on—"If you knew, my lord, how I lame my limited means on those occasions! but I have gathered something among the good people at the Well. I asked that selfish wretch Winterblossom, to walk down with me to view her distress, and the heartless beast told me he was afraid of infection! infection from puer—puerperal fever! I should not perhaps pronounce the word, but science is of no sex—however, I have always used thieves' vinegar essence, and never have gone farther than the threshold."

Whatever were Etherington's faults, he did not want charity, far as it consists in giving alms.

"I am sorry," he said, taking out his purse, "your ladyship should not have applied to me."

"Pardon me, my lord, we only beg from our friends; and your lordship is so constantly engaged with Lady Binks, that we have rarely the pleasure of seeing you in what I call *my* little circle."

Lord Etherington, without farther answer, tendered a couple of guineas, and observed, that the poor woman should have mediocrity of attendance.

"Why, so I say," answered Lady Penelope; "and I asked the braggart Quackleben, who, I am sure, owes me some gratitude, to go and see her; but the sordid monster answered, 'Who was to pay him?'—and grows every day more intolerable, now that he seems sure of making something out of that fat blowzy widow. He could not, I am sure, expect that—out of my pittance—And besides, my lord, is there not a law to the parish, or the county, or the something or other, shall pay for physicking the poor?"

"We will find means to secure the Doctor's attendance," said Lord Etherington; "and I believe my best way will be to walk back to

, and send him to wait on the patient. I am afraid I can be of use to a poor woman in a childbed fever.”

“Puerperal, my lord, puerperal,” said Lady Penelope, in a tone of affection.

“In a puerperal fever, then,” said Lord Etherington; “why, what do I do to help her?”

“Oh! my lord, you have forgotten that this Anne Heggie, that I told you of, came here with one child in her arms—and another—in her arms, about to become a mother again—and settled herself in this miserable hut I told you of—and some people think the minister would have sent her to her own parish; but he is a strange, softened, sleepy sort of man, not over-active in his parochial duties. Ever since she settled, and there was something about her quite different from the style of a common pauper, my lord—not at all the disgusting sort of person that you give a sixpence to while you look another way—but some one that seemed to have seen better days—one that, as Shakespeare says, could a tale unfold—though, indeed, I have not thoroughly learned her history—only, that to-day, as I called to know who she was, and sent my maid into her hut with some trifle, worth mentioning, I find there is something hangs about her—something concerning the Mowbray family here of St Ronan’s—and my man says the poor creature is dying, and is raving either for Mr Mowbray, or for some magistrate to receive a declaration; and so I have given you the trouble to come with me, that we may get out of this poor creature, if possible, whatever she has got to say.—I hope it is not murder—I hope not—though young St Ronan’s has been a large, wild, daring, thoughtless creature—*sgherro insigne*, as the man says.—But here is the hut, my lord—pray, walk in.”

The mention of St Ronan’s family, and of a secret relating to him, banished the thoughts which Lord Etherington began to entertain of leaving Lady Penelope to execute her works of devoted charity without his assistance. It was now with an interest equal to his own that he stood before a most miserable hut, where the unfortunate female, her distresses not greatly relieved by Lady Penelope’s gratuitous bounty, had resided both previous to her confinement, and since that event had taken place, with an old woman, one of the poorest of the poor, whose miserable dole the minister had augmented, that might have some means of assisting the stranger.

Lady Penelope lifted the latch and entered, after a momentary hesitation, which proceeded from a struggle betwixt her fear of intrusion, and her eager curiosity to know something, she could not resist, that might affect the Mowbrays in their honour or fortunes. The latter soon prevailed, and she entered, followed by Lord Etherington. The lady, like other comforters of the cabins of the poor, proceeded to rebuke the grumbling old woman for want of neatness and cleanliness—censured the food which was provided for the patient, and inquired particularly after the wine which she had left to make caudle with. The crone was not so dazzled with Lady Penelope’s dignity or bounty as to endure her reprimand with patience. “They that had their bread to won wi’ ae arm,” she said, for another hung powerless by her side, “had mair to do than to soop

houses ; if her leddyship wad let her ain idle quean of a lass take besom, she might make the house as clean as she liked ; and mair wad be a' the better of the exercise, and wad hae done, at least, turn of wark at the week's end."

"Do you hear the old hag, my lord?" said Lady Penelope. "Well, the poor are horrid ungrateful wretches.—And the wine damé—the wine?"

"The wine!—there was hardly half a mutchkin, and puir, the fashionless skink it was—the wine was drank out, ye may swear we didna fling it ower our shoulder—if ever we were to get good it was by taking it naked, and no wi' your sugar and your slaister. I wish, for ane, I had ne'er kend the sour smack o't. If the bee hadna gien me a drap of usquebaugh, I might e'en hae died of y' leddyship's liquor, for——"

Lord Etherington here interrupted the grumbling crone, thrust some silver into her grasp, and at the same time begging her to be silent. The hag weighed the crown-piece in her hand, and crawled to her chimney-corner, muttering as she went,—“This is something like—this is something like—no like running into the house and out of the house, and geeing orders, like mistress and mair, and the puir shilling again Saturday at e'en."

So saying, she sat down to her wheel, and seized, while she spun, her jet-black cutty pipe, from which she soon sent such cloud of vile mundungus vapour as must have cleared the premises of Lord Penelope, had she not been strong in purpose to share the expected confession of the invalid. As for Miss Digges, she coughed, sneezed, retched, and finally ran out of the cottage, declaring she could not live in such a smoke, if it were to hear twenty sick women's speeches ; and that, besides, she was sure to know all about it from Lady Penelope, if it was ever so little worth telling over again.

Lord Etherington was now standing beside the miserable bed, in which lay the poor patient, distracted, in what seemed to her dying moments, with the peevish clamour of the elder infant, which she could only reply by low moans, turning her looks as well as she could from its ceaseless whine, to the other side of her wretched couch, where lay the unlucky creature to which she had last given birth ; its shivering limbs imperfectly covered with a blanket, its little features already swollen and bloated, and its eyes scarce apparently insensible to the evils of a state from which it seemed about to be speedily released.

"You are very ill, poor woman," said Lord Etherington ; "I have told you desire a magistrate."

"It was Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's—whom I desired to bring—John Mowbray of St Ronan's—the lady promised to bring him here."

"I am not Mowbray of St Ronan's," said Lord Etherington ; "I am a justice of peace, and a member of the legislature—besides, Mr Mowbray's particular friend, if I can be of use to you in any of these capacities."

The poor woman remained long silent, and when she spoke it was doubtfully.

my Lady Penelope Penfeather there?" she said, straining her tired eyes.

"Your ladyship is present, and within hearing," said Lord Ether-

"My case is the worse," answered the dying woman, for so she said, "if I must communicate such a secret as mine to a man of whom I know nothing, and a woman of whom I only know that she has discretion."

"I want discretion!" said Lady Penelope; but at a signal from Lord Etherington she seemed to restrain herself; nor did the woman, whose powers of observation were greatly impaired, seem to be aware of the interruption. She spoke, notwithstanding the situation, with an intelligible and even emphatic voice; her manner in a great measure betraying the influence of the fever, and her diction and language seeming much superior to her most miserable condition.

"I am not the abject creature which I seem," she said; "at least, I am not born to be so. I wish I *were* that utter abject! I wish I were a wretched pauper of the lowest class—a starving vagabond—without a mother—ignorance and insensibility would make me bear up like the outcast animal that dies patiently on the side of the road, where it has been half-starved during its life. But I—but I am not bred to better things, have not lost the memory of my parents, and they make my present condition—my shame—my poverty—my infamy—the sight of my dying babes—the sense that my own end is coming fast on—they make these things a foretaste of

Lady Penelope's self-conceit and affectation were broken down by the painful exordium. She sobbed, shuddered, and for once perhaps she felt the real, not the assumed necessity, of putting her head on her shoulders. Lord Etherington also was moved.

"Good woman," he said, "as far as relieving your personal wants and mitigating your distress, I will see that it is fully performed, and your poor children are attended to."

"May God bless you!" said the poor woman, with a glance at the dead forms beside her; "and may you," she added, after a momentary pause, "deserve the blessing of God, for it is bestowed in abundance on those who are unworthy of it."

Lord Etherington felt, perhaps, a twinge of conscience; for he said something hastily, "Pray go on, good woman, if you really have anything to communicate to me as a magistrate—it is time for me to go. My condition was somewhat mended, and I will cause you to be attended for directly."

"I cannot wait a moment," she said; "let me unload my conscience. I go hence, for no earthly relief will long avail to prolong my life here.—I was well born, the more my present shame! well educated, the greater my present guilt!—I was always, indeed, poor, but not of the ills of poverty. I only thought of it when my vanity led me to idle and expensive gratification, for real wants I knew. I was companion of a young lady of higher rank than my mother, my relative, however, and one of such exquisite kindness of dis-

position, that she treated me as a sister, and would have shared me all that she had on earth—I scarce think I can go far with my story! something rises to my throat when I recollect how rewarded her sisterly love!—I was elder than Clara—I should directed her reading, and confirmed her understanding; but my bent led me to peruse only works which, though they burlesque nature, are seductive to the imagination. We read these together, until we had fashioned out for ourselves a little world of romance, and prepared ourselves for a maze of adventures. Our imaginations were as pure as those of angels; mine were—but unnecessary to tell them. The fiend, always watchful, present tempter at the moment when it was most dangerous.”

She paused here, as if she found difficulty in expressing her feelings, and Lord Etherington, turning with great appearance of interest to Lady Penelope, began to inquire, “Whether it were quite agreeable to her ladyship to remain any longer an ear-witness of this unfortunate’s confession?—it seems to be verging on some things—that it might be unpleasant for your ladyship to hear.”

“I was just forming the same opinion, my lord; and, to say the truth, was about to propose to your lordship to withdraw, and leave her alone with the poor woman. My sex will make her necessary communications the more frank in your lordship’s absence.”

“True, madam; but then I am called here in my capacity of magistrate.”

“Hush!” said Lady Penelope; “she speaks.”

“They say every woman that yields makes herself a slave to a seducer; but I sold my liberty not to a man but a demon! he made me serve him in his vile schemes against my friend and patroness—and oh! he found in me an agent too willing, from envy, to destroy the virtue which I had lost myself. Do not list to me any more—Go, and leave me to my fate; I am the most despicable wretch that ever lived—detestable to myself worst of all causes even in my penitence there is a secret whisper that tells me that were I as I have been, I would again act over all the wickedness I have done, and much worse. Oh! for Heaven’s assistant to crush the wicked thought!”

She closed her eyes, folded her emaciated hands, and held them upwards in the attitude of one who prays internally; present hands separated, and fell gently down on her miserable couch; her eyes did not open, nor was there the slightest sign of motion in the features. Lady Penelope shrieked faintly, hid her eyes, hurried back from the bed; while Lord Etherington, his look becoming with a complication of feelings, remained gazing on the woman, as if eager to discern whether the spark of life was not extinct. Her grim old assistant hurried to the bedside, with spirits in a broken glass.

“Have ye no had pennyworths for your charity?” she said in spiteful scorn. “Ye buy the very life o’ us wi’ your shilling sixpences, your groats and your boddles—ye hae gar’d the wretch speak till she swarfs, and now ye stand as if ye never saw a woman in a dwam before. Let me till her wi’ the dram—

s mickle drought ye ken—Stand out o' my gate, my leddy, if e that ye are a leddy; there is little use of the like of you when is death in the pot."

dy Penelope, half affronted, but still more frightened by the ers of the old hag, now gladly embraced Lord Etherington's ved offer to escort her from the hut. He left it not, however, ut bestowing an additional gratuity on the old woman, who red it with a whining benediction.

he Almighty guide your course through the troubles of this d warld—and the muckle deevil blaw wind in your sails," she l, in her natural tone, as the guests vanished from her miser- threshold—"A when cork-headed, barmy-brained gowks! wunna let puir folk sae muckle as die in quiet, wi' their sossings heir soopings."¹

his poor creature's declaration," said Lord Etherington to Lady lope, "seems to refer to matters which the law has nothing to th, and which, perhaps, as they seem to implicate the peace of ily of respectability, and the character of a young lady, we t to inquire no farther after."

differ from your lordship," said Lady Penelope; "I differ ex- ely—I suppose you guess whom her discourse touched upon?" ndeed, your ladyship does my acuteness by far too much ur."

Did she not mention a Christian name?" said Lady Penelope; r lordship is strangely dull this morning?"

A Christian name?—No, none that I heard—yes, she said thing about—a Catherine, I think it was."

Catherine?" answered the lady; "No, my lord, it was Clara— r a rare name in this country, and belonging, I think, to a g lady of whom your lordship should know something, unless evening flirtations with Lady Binks have blotted entirely out ur memory your morning visits to Shaws-Castle. You are a man, my lord. I would advise you to include Mrs Blower g the objects of your attention, and then you will have maid, and widow upon your list."

pon my honour your ladyship is too severe," said Lord Ether- n; "you surround yourself every evening with all that is clever eaccomplished among the people here, and then you ridicule a ecluded monster, who dare not approach your charmed circle, se he seeks for some amusement elsewhere. This is to tyran- nd not to reign—it is Turkish despotism!"

h! my lord, I know you well, my lord," said Lady Penelope— y would your lordship be had you not power to render your- elcome to any circle which you may please to approach."

hat is to say," answered the lord, "you will pardon me, if I in- on your ladyship's coterie this evening?"

ere is no society which Lord Etherington can think of fre- ng where he will not be a welcome guest."

will plead then at once my pardon and privilege this evening—

¹ See Note G. *Usages of Charity.*

And now" (speaking as if he had succeeded in establishing some confidence with her ladyship), "what do you really think of this blind story?"

"Oh, I must believe it concerns Miss Mowbray. She was always an odd girl—something about her I could never endure—a sort of effrontery—that is, perhaps, a harsh word, but a kind of assurance—an air of confidence—so that though I kept on a footing with her because she was an orphan girl of good family, and because I really knew nothing positively bad of her, yet she sometimes absolutely shocked me."

"Your ladyship, perhaps, would not think it right to give publicity to the story?—at least till you know exactly what it is," said the Earl, in a tone of suggestion.

"Depend upon it, that it is quite the worst, the very worst—You heard the woman say that she had exposed Clara to ruin—and you know she must have meant Clara Mowbray, because she was so anxious to tell the story to her brother, St Ronan's."

"Very true—I did not think of that," answered Lord Etherington; "still it would be hard on the poor girl if it should get abroad."

"Oh, it will never get abroad for me," said Lady Penelope; "I would not tell the very wind of it. But then I cannot meet Miss Mowbray as formerly—I have a station in life to maintain, my lord, and I am under the necessity of being select in my society—it is my duty I owe the public, if it were even not my own inclination."

"Certainly, my Lady Penelope," said Lord Etherington; "but then consider that, in a place where all eyes are necessarily observant of your ladyship's behaviour, the least coldness on your part towards Miss Mowbray—and, after all, we have nothing like assurance of anything being wrong there—would ruin her with the company here, and with the world at large."

"Oh! my lord," answered Lady Penelope, "as for the truth of the story, I have some private reasons of my own for 'holding this strange tale devoutly true;' for I had a mysterious hint from a very worthy but a very singular man (your lordship knows how he adores originality), the clergyman of the parish, who made me aware that there was something wrong about Miss Clara—something that your lordship will excuse my speaking more plainly,—Oh, no!—I fear it is all too true—You know Mr Cargill, I suppose, my lord?"

"Yes—no—I—I think I have seen him," said Lord Etherington. "But how came the lady to make the parson her father-confessor—they have no auricular confession in the Kirk—it must have been with the purpose of marriage, I presume—let us hope that it took place—perhaps it really was so—did he, Cargill—the minister mean—say anything of such a matter?"

"Not a word—not a word—I see where you are, my lord; it would put a good face on't.—"

'They call'd it marriage, by that specious name
To veil the crime, and sanctify the shame.'

Queen Dido for that. How the clergyman came into the secret

not tell—he is a very close man.—But I know he will not hear Miss Mowbray being married to any one, unquestionably because she knows that, in doing so, she would introduce disgrace into some of the best families—and, truly, I am much of his mind, my lord.” Perhaps Mr Cargill may know the lady is privately married,” said the Earl; “I think that is the more natural inference, begging your ladyship’s pardon for presuming to differ in opinion.” Lady Penelope seemed determined not to take this view of the

“No, no—no, I tell you,” she replied; “she cannot be married, if she were married, how could the poor wretch say that she is ruined?—You know there is a difference betwixt ruin and age.”

“Some people are said to have found them synonymous, Lady Penelope,” answered the Earl.

“You are smart on me, my lord; but still, in common parlance, when we say a woman is ruined, we mean quite the contrary of her being married—it is impossible for me to be more explicit upon such a subject, my lord.”

“I defer to your ladyship’s better judgment,” said Lord Etherington. “I only entreat you to observe a little caution on this business. I will make the strictest inquiries of this woman, and acquaint you with the result; and I hope, out of regard to the respectable name of St Ronan’s, your ladyship will be in no hurry to intimate anything to Miss Mowbray’s prejudice.”

“I certainly am no person to spread scandal, my lord,” answered Lady Penelope, drawing herself up; “at the same time, I must say, the Spaw has little claim on me for forbearance. I am sure I am the first person to bring this Spaw into fashion, which has been the result of such consequence to their estate; and yet Mr Mowbray has turned himself against me, my lord, in every possible sort of way, and encouraged the under-bred people about him to behave very badly.—There was the business of building the Belvidere, which he would not permit to be done out of the stock-purse of the company, because I had given the workmen the plan and the orders—then, about the tea-room—and the hour for beginning dancing—and about the subscription for Mr Reymour’s new Tale of Mystery—in short, I owe no consideration to Mr Mowbray of St Ronan’s.”

“But the poor young lady,” said Lord Etherington.

“The poor young lady?—the poor young lady can be as saucy as the young lady, I promise you. There was a business in which she scandalized me, Lord Etherington—it was about a very trifling matter—a shawl. Nobody minds dress less than I do, my lord, thank Heaven my thoughts turn upon very different topics—upon trifles that disrespect and unkindness are shown; and I have had a full share of both from Miss Clara, besides a good deal of civility from her brother upon the same subject.”

“There is but one way remains,” thought the Earl, as they approached the Spaw, “and that is to work on the fears of this dreadfully blue-stockinged wild-cat.—Your ladyship,” he said aloud,

"is aware what severe damages have been awarded in late cases where something approaching to scandal has been traced to ladies of consideration—the privileges of the tea-table have been found insufficient to protect some fair critics against the consequences of too frank and liberal animadversion upon the characters of their friends. So pray, remember, that as yet we know very little of this subject."

Lady Penelope loved money, and feared the law; and this habit, fortified by her acquaintance with Mowbray's love of his sister, and his irritable and revengeful disposition, brought her in a moment much nearer the temper in which Lord Etherington wished to leave her. She protested, that no one could be more tender than she of the fame of the unfortunate, even supposing their guilt was fully proved—promised caution on the subject of the pauper's declaration, and hoped Lord Etherington would join her tea-party early in the evening, as she wished to make him acquainted with one or two of her *protégés*, whom, she was sure, his lordship would find deserving of his advice and countenance. Being by this time at the door of her own apartment, her ladyship took leave of the Earl with the most gracious smile.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

On the lee-beam lies the land, boys,
See all clear to reef each course;
Let the fore-sheet go, don't mind, boys,
Though the weather should be worse.

The Storm.

"It darkens round me like a tempest," thought Lord Etherington, as, with slow step, folded arms, and his white hat slung over his brows, he traversed the short interval of space between his own apartments and those of the Lady Penelope. In a drawing-room of the old school, one of Congreve's men of wit and pleasure at town, this would have been a departure from character; but in the present fine man does not derogate from his quality, even by exhibiting all the moody and gentleman-like solemnity of Master Stephen. So, Lord Etherington was at liberty to carry on his reflections without attracting observation.—"I have put a stopper into the mouth of that old vinegar-cruet of quality, but the acidity of his temper will soon dissolve the charm—And what to do?"

As he looked round him, he saw his trusty valet Solmes, touching his hat with due respect, said, as he passed him, "Your lordship's letters are in your private despatch-box."

Simple as these words were, and indifferent the tone in which they were spoken, their import made Lord Etherington's heart bound. If his fate had depended on the accents. He intimated no further interest in the communication, however, than to desire Solmes to stand below, in case he should ring; and with these words entered

ment, and barred and bolted the door, even before he looked on the table where his despatch-box was placed. Lord Etherington had, as is usual, one key to the box which held letters, his confidential servant being intrusted with the other; but, under the protection of a patent lock, his despatches escaped the risk of being tampered with,—a precaution not altogether unnecessary on the part of those who frequent hotels and lodging-houses. "By your leave, Mr Bramah," said the Earl, as he applied the key, "as it were, with his own agitation, as he would have done that of a third party. The lid was raised, and displayed the letter, the appearance and superscription of which had attracted Lord Etherington's observation but a short while since in the post-office. Then he would have given much to be possessed of the opportunity which was in his power; but many pause on the brink of a crime, who contemplate it at a distance without scruple. Lord Etherington's first impulse had led him to poke the fire; and he held in his hand the letter which he was more than half tempted to commit, without even breaking the seal, to the fiery element. But, though sufficiently familiarised with guilt, he was not as yet acquainted with its basest shapes—he had not yet acted with meanness, or at least with what the world terms such. He had been a duellist, the manners of the age authorised it—a libertine, the world excused his youth and condition—a bold and successful gambler, for that quality he was admired and envied; and a thousand other inaccusations, to which these practices and habits lead, were easily slurred in a man of quality, with fortune and spirit to support his rank. His present meditated act was of a different kind. Tell it not in Pall Mall Street, whisper it not on St James's pavement!—it amounted to an act of petty larceny, for which the code of honour would admit of no composition.

Lord Etherington, under the influence of these recollections, stood a few minutes suspended—But the devil always finds logic to convince his followers. He recollected the wrong done to his mother, to himself, her offspring, to whom his father had, in the face of the whole world, imparted the hereditary rights, of which he was deprived by a posthumous deed, endeavouring to deprive the memory of the one and the expectations of the other. Surely, the right being his own, he had a full title, by the most effectual means, whatever means might be, to repel all attacks on that right, and even to destroy, if necessary, the documents by which his enemies were prosecuting their unjust plans against his honour and interest.

His reasoning prevailed, and Lord Etherington again held the lettered packet above the flames; when it occurred to him that, his resolution being taken, he ought to carry it into execution as effectually as possible; and to do so, it was necessary to know that the letter actually contained the papers which he was desirous to de-

stroy. Never did a doubt arise in juster time; for no sooner had the seal broken, and the envelope rustled under his fingers, than he perceived, to his utter consternation, that he held in his hand only the copies of the letters for which Francis Tyrrel had written, the originals of which,

he had too sanguinely concluded, would be forwarded according to his requisition. A letter from a partner of the house with which the papers were deposited stated, that they had not felt themselves at liberty in the absence of the head of their firm, to whom these papers had been committed, to part with them even to Mr Tyrrel, though he had proceeded so far as to open the parcel, and now transmitted him formal copies of the papers contained in it, which, they presumed, would serve Mr Tyrrel's purpose for consulting counsel to the like. They themselves, in a case of so much delicacy, and in the absence of their principal partner, were determined to retain the originals, unless called to produce them in a court of justice.

With a solemn imprecation on the formality and absurdity of the proceeding, the writer, Lord Etherington let the letter of advice drop from his hand into the fire, and throwing himself into a chair, passed his hand across his eyes, as if their very power of sight had been blighted by what he had read. His title, and his paternal fortune, which he had thought but an instant before might be rendered unchallengeable by a single movement of his hand, seemed now on the verge of being lost for ever. His rapid recollection failed not to remind him of what was less known to the world, that his early and profuse expenditure had greatly dilapidated his maternal fortune; and that the estate of Nettlewood, which five minutes ago he only coveted as a wealthy man desires increase of his store, must now be acquired, if he would avoid being a poor and embarrassed spendthrift. To impede his possessing himself of this property, fate had restored to the scene the penitent of the morning, who, as he had too much reason to believe, was returned to this neighbourhood, to do justice to Clara Mowbray, and who was not unlikely to put the whole story of the marriage on its right footing. She, however, might be got rid of, and it might still be possible to hurry Miss Mowbray, by working on her fears, or through the agency of her brother, into a union with him while he still preserved the title of Lord Etherington. Therefore, he resolved to secure, if effort or if intrigue could carry the point; nor was it the least consideration that, should he succeed, he would obtain over Tyrrel, his successful rival, such a triumph as would be sufficient to imbitter the tranquillity of his whole life.

In a few minutes his rapid and contriving invention had formed a plan for securing the sole advantage which seemed to remain open for him; and conscious that he had no time to lose, he entered immediately upon the execution.

The bell summoned Solmes to his lordship's apartment, when the Earl, as coolly as if he had hoped to dupe his experienced valet by such an assertion, said, "You have brought me a packet designed for some man at the Aultoun—let it be sent to him—Stay, I will re-seal it first."

He accordingly re-sealed the packet, containing all the writing excepting the letter of advice (which he had burnt), and gave it to the valet, with the caution, "I wish you would not make such blunders in future."

"I beg your lordship's pardon—I will take better care again. I thought it was addressed to your lordship."

answered Solmes, too knowing to give the least look of intelligence, far less to remind the Earl that his own directions had occasioned the mistake of which he complained.

Solmes," continued the Earl, "you need not mention your blunder at the post-office; it would only occasion tattle in this idle place—be sure that the gentleman has his letter.—And, Solmes, I see Mowbray walk across—ask him to dine with me to-day at five. I have a headache, and cannot face the clamour of the savages who sit at the public table.—And—let me see—make my compliments to my lady Penelope Penfeather—I will certainly have the honour of calling on her ladyship this evening to tea, agreeably to her very kind invitation received—write her a proper card, and word it in your own way. Bespeak dinner for two, and see you have some of the best batch of Burgundy." The servant was retiring, when his master added, "Stay a moment—I have a more important business than I have yet mentioned.—Solmes, you have managed devilish ill with the woman Irwin!"

"I, my lord?" answered Solmes.

"Yes, you sir,—did you not tell me she had gone to the West Indies with a friend of yours, and did not I give them a couple of hundred pounds for passage-money?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the valet.

"Ay, but now it proves *no*, my lord," said Lord Etherington; "for she has found her way back to this country in miserable plight—half-starved, and no doubt willing to do or say anything for a livelihood. How has this happened?"

"Biddulph must have taken her cash, and turned her loose, my lord," answered Solmes, as if he had been speaking of the most commonplace transaction in the world; "but I know the woman's nature well, and am so much master of her history, that I can carry her back to the country in twenty-four hours, and place her where she will never think of returning, provided your lordship can spare me so long."

"About it directly—but I can tell you, that you will find the woman in a very penitential humour, and very ill in health to boot."

"I am sure of my game," answered Solmes; "with submission to your lordship, I think if death and her good angel had hold of one of that woman's arms, the devil and I could make a shift to lead her away by the other."

"Away and about it, then," said Etherington. "But, hark ye, Solmes, be kind to her, and see all her wants relieved.—I have done no mischief enough—though nature and the devil had done half the work to my hand."

Solmes at length was permitted to withdraw to execute his various commissions, with an assurance that his services would not be wanted for the next twenty-four hours.

"Soh!" said the Earl, as his agent withdrew, "there is a spring in motion which, well oiled, will move the whole machine.—And, in lucky time, comes Harry Jekyl—I hear his whistle on the stairs.—There is a silly lightness of heart about that fellow which I dislike, while I despise it; but he is welcome now, for I want him."

Jekyl entered accordingly, and broke out with, "I am glad to see one of your fellows laying a cloth for two in your parlour, Etherington—I was afraid you were going down among these confounded bores again to-day."

"You are not to be one of the two, Hal," answered Lord Etherington.

"No?—then I may be a third, I hope, if not second?"

"Neither first, second, or third, Captain.—The truth is, I was at a *tête-a-tête* with Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's," replied the Earl, "and besides. I have to beg the very particular favour of you to go again to that fellow Martigny. It is time that he should produce his papers, if he has any—of which, for one, I do not believe a word. He has had ample time to hear from London; and I think I have delayed long enough in an important matter upon his bare assertion."

"I cannot blame your impatience," said Jekyl, "and I will go on your errand instantly. As you waited on my advice I am bound to find an end to your suspense. At the same time, if the man is not possessed of such papers as he spoke of, I must own he is happy in command of consummate assurance, which might set up the whole roll of attorneys."

"You will be soon able to judge of that," said Lord Etherington, "and now, off with you—Why do you look at me so anxiously?"

"I cannot tell—I have strange forebodings about this *tête-a-tête* with Mowbray. You should spare him, Etherington,—he is not your match—wants both judgment and temper."

"Tell him so, Jekyl," answered the Earl, "and his proud Scotch stomach will be up in an instant, and he will pay you with a shot for your pains.—Why, he thinks himself cock of the walk, this strutting bantam, notwithstanding the lesson I gave him before—And what do you think?—he has the impudence to talk about my attentions to Lady Binks as inconsistent with the prosecution of my suit to his sister! Yes, Hal—this awkward Scotch laird, that has scarce talent enough to make love to a ewe-milker, or at best to some daggled tailed soubrette, has the assurance to start himself as my rival!"

"Then, good-night to St Ronan's!—this will be a fatal dinner to him.—Etherington, I know by that laugh you are bent on mischief—I have a great mind to give him a hint."

"I wish you would," answered the Earl; "it would all turn to my account."

"Do you defy me?—Well, if I meet him, I will put him on his guard."

The friends parted; and it was not long ere Jekyl encountered Mowbray on one of the public walks.

"You dine with Etherington to-day?" said the Captain—"Forgive me, Mr Mowbray, if I say one single word—Beware."

"Of what should I beware, Captain Jekyl," answered Mowbray, "when I dine with a friend of your own, and a man of honour?"

"Certainly Lord Etherington is both, Mr Mowbray; but he loves play, and is too hard for most people."

"I thank you for your hint, Captain Jekyl—I am a raw Scottish man, it is true; but yet I know a thing or two. Fair play is always presumed amongst gentlemen; and that taken for granted, I have

nity to think I need no one's caution on the subject, not even in Jekyl's, though his experience must needs be so much superior to mine."

that case, sir," said Jekyl, bowing coldly, "I have no more to say and I hope there is no harm done.—Conceited coxcomb!" he said, mentally, as they parted, "how truly did Etherington judge of me, and what an ass was I to intermeddle!—I hope Etherington will strip him of every feather."

Jekyl pursued his walk in quest of Tyrrel, and Mowbray proceeded to the apartments of the Earl, in a temper of mind well suited to the character of the latter, who judged of his disposition accurately when he permitted Jekyl to give his well-meant warning. To be supposed by a man of acknowledged fashion, so decidedly inferior to his antagonist—to be considered as an object of compassion, and made the subject of a good-boy warning, was gall and bitterness to his spirit, which, the more that he felt a conscious inferiority in the arts which they all cultivated, struggled the more to preserve the appearance of at least apparent equality.

At the first memorable party at piquet, Mowbray had never equalled his luck with Lord Etherington, except for trifling stakes; his conceit led him to suppose that he now fully understood his opponent, and, agreeably to the practice of those who have habituated themselves to gambling, he had, every now and then, felt a yearning to avenge his revenge. He wished also to be out of Lord Etherington's clutches, feeling galled under a sense of pecuniary obligation, which hindered his speaking his mind to him fully upon the subject of his conduct towards Lady Binks, which he justly considered as an insult to himself, considering the footing on which the Earl seemed desirous to stand with Clara Mowbray. From these obligations a favourable opportunity might free him, and Mowbray was, in fact, indulging in a day-dream to this purpose, when Jekyl interrupted him. His timely warning only excited a spirit of contradiction, and a determination to show the adviser how little he was qualified to judge of events; and in this humour, his ruin, which was the consequence of the afternoon, was far from even seeming to be the premeditated, but the voluntary work of the Earl of Etherington.

On the contrary, the victim himself was the first to propose play to be played—double stakes; while Lord Etherington, on the other hand, often proposed to diminish their game, or to break off entirely; but he was always with an affectation of superiority, which only stimulated Mowbray to farther and more desperate risks; and, at last, Mowbray became his debtor to an overwhelming amount (his circumstances considered), the Earl threw down the cards, and declared that it should be too late for Lady Penelope's tea-party, to which he was positively engaged.

"Will you not give me my revenge?" said Mowbray, taking up the cards, and shuffling them with fierce anxiety.

"Not now, Mowbray; we have played too long already—you have lost much—more than perhaps is convenient for you to pay."

Mowbray gnashed his teeth, in spite of his resolution to maintain his position, at least, of firmness.

"You can take your time, you know," said the Earl; "a not hand will suit me as well as the money."

"No, by G—!" answered Mowbray, "I will not be so taken a second time—I had better have sold myself to the devil than to your lordship—I have never been my own man since."

"These are not very kind expressions, Mowbray," said the Earl; "you *would* play, and they that will play must expect sometime to lose——"

"And they who win will expect to be paid," said Mowbray, breaking in. "I know that as well as you, my lord, and you shall be paid—I will pay you—I will pay you, by G—! Do you make any doubt that I will pay you, my lord?"

"You look as if you thought of paying me in sharp coin," said Lord Etherington; "and I think that would scarce be consistent with the terms we stand upon towards each other."

"By my soul," said Mowbray, "I cannot tell what these terms are; and to be at my wit's end at once, I should be glad to know them. You set out upon paying addresses to my sister, and with your views and opportunities at Shaws-Castle, I cannot find the matter making the least progress—it keeps moving without advancing, like a churning-rocking-horse. Perhaps you think that you have curbed me a little too tightly that I dare not stir in the matter; but you will find it otherwise.—Your lordship may keep a haram if you will, but my sister shall not enter it."

"You are angry, and therefore you are unjust," said Lord Etherington; "you know well enough it is your sister's fault that there is any delay. I am most willing—most desirous to call her Lady Etherington—nothing but her unlucky prejudices against me have retarded the union which I have so many reasons for desiring."

"Well," replied Mowbray, "that shall be my business. I know the reason she can pretend to decline a marriage so honourable to her house, and which is approved of by me, that house's head. The matter shall be arranged in twenty-four hours."

"It will do me the most sensible pleasure," said Lord Etherington; "you shall soon see how sincerely I desire your alliance; and I regret the trifle you have lost——"

"It is no trifle to me, my lord—it is my ruin—but it shall be made up to me—and let me tell your lordship, you may thank your good luck more than your good play."

"We will say no more of it at present, if you please," said Lord Etherington, "to-morrow is a new day; and if you will take my advice, you will not be too harsh with your sister. A little firmness is seldom amiss with young women, but severity——"

"I will pray your lordship to spare me your advice on this subject. However valuable it may be in other respects, I can, I take it, take it to my own sister in my own way."

"Since you are so caustically disposed, Mowbray," answered Lord Etherington, "I presume you will not honour her ladyship's tea-table to-night, though I believe it will be the last of the season?"

"And why should you think so, my lord?" answered Mowbray; "whose losses had rendered him testy and contradictory upon

that was started. "Why should not I pay my respects to Penelope, or any other tabby of quality? I have no title, indeed, but I suppose that my family——"

"Titles you to become a canon of Strasburgh, doubtless—But do not seem in a very Christian mood for taking orders. All I have to say was, that you and Lady Pen were not used to be on such good footing."

"Well, she sent me a card for her blow-out," said Mowbray; "and I am resolved to go. When I have been there half an hour I will be up to Shaws-Castle, and you shall hear of my speed in wooing a to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A TEA-PARTY.

Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round ;
And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
Thus let us welcome peaceful evening in.

COWPER'S *Task*.

The approach of the cold and rainy season had now so far thinned the company at the Well, that, in order to secure the necessary defilement of crowd upon her tea nights, Lady Penelope was obliged to employ some coaxing towards those whom she had considered as under par in society. Even the Doctor and Mrs Blower were usually smiled upon—for their marriage was now an arranged affair—and the event was of a nature likely to spread the reputation of Spaw among wealthy widows, and medical gentlemen of more than ordinary practice. So in they came, the Doctor smirking, gallant, and performing all the bustling parade of settled and arranged matrimony, with much of that grace wherewith a turkey-cock goes through the same ceremony. Old Touchwood had also attended her ladyship's summons, chiefly, it may be supposed, from his restless disposition, which seldom suffered him to remain absent even from those places of resort of which he usually professed his detestation. There was, besides, Mr Winterblossom, who, in his usual spirit of epicurism and quiet self-indulgence, was, under the fire of a shower of compliments to Lady Penelope, scheming to secure for himself an early cup of tea. There was Lady Binks also, with the same degree of sullenness in her beautiful face, angry at her husband's usual, and not disposed to be pleased with Lord Etherington being absent, when she desired to excite Sir Bingo's jealousy. She had discovered to be the most effectual way of tormenting her sonnet, and she rejoiced in it with the savage glee of a hackney coachman, who has found a *raw*, where he can make his poor jade sweat under the whip. The rest of the company were also in attendance as usual. MacTurk himself was present, notwithstanding that he

thought it an egregious waste of hot water, to bestow it upon compounding any mixture, saving punch. He had of late associated himself a good deal with the traveller; not that they by any means resembled each other in temper or opinions, but rather because there was that degree of difference betwixt them which furnished perpetual subject for dispute and discussion. They were not long, on the present occasion, ere they lighted on a fertile source of controversy.

"Never tell me of your points of honour," said Touchwood, raising his voice altogether above the general tone of polite conversation. "all humbug, Captain MacTurk—mere hair-traps to springe wo cocks—men of sense break through them."

"Upon my word, sir," said the Captain, "and myself is surprised to hear you—for, look you, sir, every man's honour is the breath of his nostrils—Cot tamn!"

"Then, let men breathe through their mouths and be d—d," returned the controversialist. "I tell you, sir, that, besides its being forbidden, both by law and gospel, it's an idiotical and totally absurd practice that of duelling. An honest savage has more sense than to practise it—he takes his bow or his gun, as the thing may be, and shoots his enemy from behind a bush. And a very good way; for you see there can, in that case, be only one man's death between them."

"Saul of my body, sir," said the Captain, "gin ye promulgate such doctrines among the good company, it's my belief you will bring somebody to the gallows."

"Thank ye, Captain, with all my heart; but I stir up no quarrels. I leave war to them that live by it. I only say that, except our stupid ancestors in the north-west here, I know no country so stupid as to harbour this custom of duelling. It is unknown in Africa among the negroes—in America."

"Don't tell me that," said the Captain; "a Yankee will fight with muskets and buckshot, rather than sit still with an affront. I should know Jonathan, I think."

"Altogether unknown among the thousand tribes of India."

"I'll be tamned, then!" said Captain MacTurk. "Was I not at Tippoo's prison at Bangalore? and, when the joyful day of our liberation came, did we not solemnise it with fourteen little affairs, when we had been laying the foundation in our house of captivity, as Herod Writ has it, and never went farther to settle them than the glacis of the fort? By my soul, you would have thought there was a small skirmish, the firing was so close; and did not I, Captain MacTurk, fight three of them myself, without moving my foot from the place I set it on?"

"And pray, sir, what might be the result of this Christian mission of giving thanks for your deliverance?" demanded Mr Touchwood.

"A small list of casualties, after all," said the Captain; "three killed on the spot, one died of his wounds—two wounded severely—three ditto slightly, and little Duncan Macphail reported missing. We were out of practice after such long confinement. So you see how we manage matters in India, my dear friend."

"You are to understand," replied Touchwood, "that I spoke of the heathen natives, who, heathen as they are, live in the light."

own moral reason, and among whom ye shall therefore see examples of practical morality than among such as yourselves; though calling yourselves Christians, have no more knowledge of the true acceptation and meaning of your religion, than if you had your Christianity at the Cape of Good Hope, as they say of you, "forgot to take it up when you come back again."

"Py Cot! and I can tell you, sir," said the Captain, elevating at his voice and his nostrils, and snuffing the air with a truculent and indignant visage, "that I will not permit you or any man to bring any such scandal on my character. I thank Cot I can bring a witness that I am as good a Christian as another, for a poor fellow, as the best of us are; and I am ready to justify my religion with my sword—Cot tamn!—Compare my own self with a parcel of black heathen bodies and natives, that were never in the inner side of a kirk whilst they lived, but go about worshipping stocks and stones, and swinging themselves upon bamboos, like peasts, as they are!" The indignant growling in his throat, which sounded like the accent of his inward man in the indignant proposition which his vocal organs thus expressed, concluded this haughty speech, which, however, made not the least impression on Touchwood, who was as little for angry tones and looks as he did for fine speeches. That it is likely a quarrel between the Christian preceptor and the peacemaker might have occurred for the amusement of the company, had not the attention of both, but particularly that of Touchwood, been diverted from the topic of debate by the entrance of Lord Etherington and Mowbray.

The former was, as usual, all grace, smiles, and gentleness. Yet, contrary to his wonted custom, which usually was, after a few general compliments, to attach himself particularly to Lady Binks, the Earl, on the present occasion, avoided the side of the room on which that beautiful but sullen idol held her station, and attached himself exclusively to Lady Penelope Penfeather, enduring, without flinching, the large variety of conceited *bavardage*, which that lady's natural wit and acquired information enabled her to pour forth with unparedd profusion.

A honest heathen, one of Plutarch's heroes, if I mistake not, dreamed once upon a night, that the figure of Proserpina, whom he long worshipped, visited his slumbers with an angry and vindictive countenance, and menaced him with vengeance, in resentment for having neglected her altars, with the usual fickleness of a theist, for those of some more fashionable divinity. Not that the goddess of the infernal regions herself could assume a more haughty or more displeased countenance than that with which Lady Binks looked from time to time upon Lord Etherington, as if to warn him of the consequence of this departure from the allegiance which the great Earl had hitherto manifested towards her, and which seemed she knew not why, unless it were for the purpose of public reprobation, to be transferred to her rival. Perilous as her eye-glances were, and much as they menaced, Lord Etherington felt at this moment the importance of soothing Lady Penelope to silence on the subject of the invalid's confession of that morning, to be more press-

ing than that of appeasing the indignation of Lady Binks. The former was a case of the most urgent necessity—the latter, if he were at all anxious on the subject, might, he perhaps thought, be trusted to time. Had the ladies continued on a tolerable footing together, he might have endeavoured to conciliate both. But the bitterness of their long-suppressed feud had greatly increased, now that it was probable the end of the season was to separate them, in all likelihood for ever; so that Lady Penelope had no longer any motive for countenancing Lady Binks, or the Lady of Sir Bingo for desiring Lady Penelope's countenance. The wealth and lavish expense of the one was no longer to render more illustrious the suit of her right honourable friend, nor was the society of Lady Penelope likely to be soon again useful or necessary to Lady Binks. So that neither were any longer desirous to suppress symptoms of the mutual contempt and dislike which they had long nourished for each other; and whoever should in this decisive hour, take part with one, had little henceforward to expect from her rival. What farther and more private reasons Lady Binks might have to resent the defection of Lord Etherington, have never come with certainty to our knowledge; but it was said there had been high words between them on the floating report that his lordship's visits to Shaws-Castle were dictated by the wish to find a bride there.

Women's wits are said to be quick in spying the surest means of avenging a real or supposed slight. After biting her pretty lip, and revolving in her mind the readiest means of vengeance, she threw in her way young Mowbray of Saint Ronan's. She looked at him, and endeavoured to fix his attention with a nod and gracious smile, such as in an ordinary mood would have instantly drawn him to her side. On receiving in answer only a vacant glance and a bow, she was led to observe him more attentively, and was induced to believe, from his wavering look, varying complexion, and unsteady step, that he had been drinking unusually deep. Still his eyes were less that of an intoxicated than of a disturbed and desperate man, one whose faculties were engrossed by deep and turbid reflections which withdrew him from the passing scene.

"Do you observe how ill Mr Mowbray looks?" said she, in a low whisper; "I hope he has not heard what Lady Penelope was just now saying of his family?"

"Unless he hears it from you, my lady," answered Mr Touchwood, who, upon Mowbray's entrance, had broken off his discourse with MacTurk, "I think there is little chance of his learning from any other person."

"What is the matter?" said Mowbray, sharply, addressing Clatterly and Winterblossom; but the one shrunk nervously from the question, protesting, he indeed had not been precisely attending to what had been passing among the ladies, and Winterblossom bowed out of the scrape with quiet and cautious politeness—"He really has not given particular attention to what was passing—I was negotiating with Mrs Jones for an additional lump of sugar to my coffee. Egad, it was so difficult a piece of diplomacy," he added, sinking his voice, "that I have an idea her ladyship calculates the West India produce by grains and pennyweights."

innuendo, if designed to make Mowbray smile, was far from doing. He stepped forward, with more than usual stiffness in which was never entirely free from self-consequence, and said to Lady Binks, "May I request to know of your ladyship what par-
respecting my family had the honour to engage the attention of your company?"

As only a listener, Mr Mowbray," returned Lady Binks, with the enjoyment of the rising indignation which she read in his countenance; "not being queen of the night, I am not at all disposed to be answerable for the turn of the conversation."

Mowbray, in no humour to bear jesting, yet afraid to expose himself to farther inquiry in a company so public, darted a fierce look at Lady Penelope, then in close conversation with Lord Etherington, and advanced a step or two towards them,—then, as if checking himself, turned on his heel and left the room. A few minutes afterwards, when certain satirical nods and winks were circulating in the assembly, a waiter slid a piece of paper into Mrs Jones's hand, who, on looking at the contents, seemed about to leave the

"Jones—Jones!" exclaimed Lady Penelope, in surprise and displeasure.

"Only the key of the tea-caddie, your ladyship," answered Jones; "I'll be back in an instant."

"Jones—Jones!" again exclaimed her mistress, "here is the key of the tea-caddie—of tea, she would have said; but Lord Etherington was so near her that she was ashamed to complete the sentence, and she only hope in Jones's quickness of apprehension, and the effect that she would be unable to find the key which she went in search of."

Mrs Jones, meanwhile, tripped off to a sort of house-keeper's apartment, of which she was *locum tenens* for the evening, for the more ready supply of whatever might be wanted on Lady Penelope's part, as it was called. Here she found Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, and she instantly began to assail with, "La! now, Mr Mowbray, how can such another gentleman!—I am sure you will make me lose my temper—I'll swear you will—what can you have to say, that you cannot as well put off for an hour?"

"I want to know, Jones," answered Mowbray, in a different tone, than that from what the damsel expected, "what your lady was just saying about my family."

"Law!—was that all?" answered Mrs Jones. "What should I be saying?—nonsense—Who minds what she says?—I am sure I can do, for one."

"But, my dear Jones," said Mowbray, "I insist upon knowing what you do not know, and I *will* know."

"Mr Mowbray, why should I make mischief?—As I live, I expect some one coming! and if you were found speaking with me in this manner, indeed, some one is coming!"

"The devil may come, if he will!" said Mowbray, "but we do not expect any pretty mistress, till you tell me what I wish to know."

"And, sir, you frighten me!" answered Jones; "but all the room

heard it as well as I—it was about Miss Mowbray—and that my would be shy of her company hereafter—for that she was—
was——”

“For that my sister was *what*?” said Mowbray, fiercely, seizing her arm.

“Lord, sir, you terrify me,” said Jones, beginning to cry; “at rate, it was not I that said it—it was Lady Penelope.”

“And what was it the old, adder-tongued madwoman dared to of Clara Mowbray—Speak out plainly, and directly, or, by Heaven I’ll make you!”

“Hold, sir—hold, for God’s sake!—you will break my arm,” answered the terrified handmaiden. “I am sure I know no harm Miss Mowbray; only, my lady spoke as if she was no better than ought to be.—Lord, sir, there is some one listening at the door and making a spring out of his grasp, she hastened back to the room in which the company were assembled.

Mowbray stood petrified at the news he had heard, ignorant at what could be the motive for a calumny so atrocious, and uncertain what he were best do to put a stop to the scandal. To his far confusion, he was presently convinced of the truth of Mrs Jones’s belief that they had been watched, for, as he went to the door of his apartment, he was met by Mr Touchwood.

“What has brought you here, sir?” said Mowbray, sternly.

“Hoitie toitie,” answered the traveller, “why, how come *you* here if you go to that, squire?—Egad, Lady Penelope is trembling for souchong, so I just took a step here to save her ladyship the trouble of looking after Mrs Jones in person, which, I think, might have had a worse interruption than mine, Mr Mowbray.”

“Pshaw, sir, you talk nonsense,” said Mowbray; “the tea-room so infernally hot, that I had sat down here a moment to draw breath when the young woman came in.”

“And you are going to run away, now the old gentleman is coming in,” said Touchwood—“Come, sir, I am more your friend than you may think.”

“Sir, you are intrusive—I want nothing that you can give me,” said Mowbray.

“That is a mistake,” answered the senior; “for I can supply with what most young men want—money and wisdom.”

“You will do well to keep both till they are wanted,” said Mowbray.

“Why, so I would, squire, only that I have taken something of a fancy for your family; and they are supposed to have wanted money and good counsel for two generations, if not for three.”

“Sir,” said Mowbray, angrily, “you are too old either to play the buffoon, or to get buffoon’s payment.”

“Which is like monkey’s allowance, I suppose,” said the traveller, “more kicks than halfpence.—Well—at least I am not young enough to quarrel with boys for bullying. I’ll convince you, however, Mowbray, that I know some more of your affairs than what you will give me credit for.”

may be," answered Mowbray, "but you will oblige me more by sending your own."

very like; meantime, your losses to-night to my Lord Etherington are no trifle, and no secret neither."

Mr Touchwood, I desire to know where you had your information," said Mowbray.

A matter of very little consequence compared to its truth or falsehood," Mr Mowbray," answered the old gentleman.

It is of the last importance to me, sir," said Mowbray. "In a word, you give me such information by or through means of Lord Etherington? Answer me this single question, and then I shall know better what to talk on the subject."

"Upon my honour," said Touchwood, "I neither had my information from Lord Etherington directly nor indirectly. I say thus to give you satisfaction, and I now expect you will hear me with patience."

"Forgive me, sir," interrupted Mowbray, "one farther question. Did you understand something was said in disparagement of my sister, just as she entered the tea-room?"

"Hem—hem—hem," said Touchwood, hesitating. "I am sorry my years have served you so well—something there *was* said lightly, something that can be easily explained, I daresay;—And now, Mr Mowbray, let me speak a few serious words with you."

"And now, Mr Touchwood, we have no more to say to each other this evening to you."

Mowbray brushed past the old man, who in vain endeavoured to stop him, and hurrying to the stable, demanded his horse. It was ready saddled, and obeyed his orders; but even the short time that was necessary to get it to the door of the stable was exasperating to Mowbray's impatience. Not less exasperating was the constant interceding voice of Touchwood, who, in tones alternately plaintive and snappish, kept up a string of expostulations.

"Mr Mowbray, only five words with you—Mr Mowbray, you will not wait for this—Is this a night to ride in, Mr Mowbray?—My stars, sir, you would but have five minutes' patience!"

"Res, not loud but deep, muttered in the throat of the impatient man, were the only reply, until his horse was brought out, when, giving no farther question, he sprung into the saddle. The poor horse, paid for the delay, which could not be laid to his charge. Mowbray struck him hard with his spurs as soon as he was in his seat. The noble animal reared, bolted, and sprung forward like a runaway over stock and stone, the nearest road—and we are aware it was a rough one—to Shaws-Castle. There is a sort of instinct by which horses perceive the humour of their riders, and are furious if impatient, or dull and sluggish, as if to correspond with it; and Mowbray's gallant steed seemed on this occasion to feel all the stings of his master's internal ferment, although not again urged with the whip. The ostler stood listening to the clash of the hoofs, succeeding from thick and close gallop, until they died away in the distance of the goodland.

"If St Ronan's reach home this night with his neck unbroken muttered the fellow, "the devil must have it in keeping."

"Mercy on us!" said the traveller, "he rides like a Bedouin Arab but in the desert there are neither trees to cross the road, nor cleuchs, nor lins, nor floods, nor fords. Well, I must set to work myself, or this gear will get worse than even I can mend.—He you, ostler, let me have your best pair of horses instantly to Shaws-Castle."

"To Shaws-Castle, sir?" said the man, with some surprise.

"Yes—do you not know such a place?"

"In troth, sir, sae few company go there, except on the great holiday, that we have had time to forget the road to it—but St Ronan was here even now, sir."

"Ay, what of that?—he has ridden on to get supper ready—turn out without loss of time."

"At your pleasure, sir," said the fellow, and called to the postilion accordingly.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEBATE.

Sed et post equitem atra cura—

Still though the headlong cavalier,
O'er rough and smooth, in wild career,
Seems racing with the wind;
His sad companion,—ghastly pale,
And darksome as a widow's veil,
CARE—keeps her seat behind.

HORACE.

WELL was it that night for Mowbray, that he had always pig himself on his horses, and that the animal on which he was mounted was as sure-footed and sagacious as he was mettled fiery. For those who observed next day the print of the hoofs the broken and rugged track through which the creature had been driven at full speed by his furious master, might easily see, that more than a dozen of places the horse and rider had been with few inches of destruction. One bough of a gnarled and stunted tree, which stretched across the road, seemed in particular to have opposed an almost fatal barrier to the horseman's career. In striking his head against this impediment, the force of the blow had been broken in some measure by a high-crowned hat, yet the violence of the shock was sufficient to shiver the branch to pieces. Fortunately it was already decayed; but, even in that state, it was subject to astonishment to every one that no fatal damage had been sustained in so formidable an encounter. Mowbray himself was unconscious of the accident.

Scarcely aware that he had been riding at an unusual rate, so sensible that he had ridden faster perhaps than ever he followed

ds, Mowbray alighted at his stable door, and flung the bridle to room, who held up his hands in astonishment when he beheld condition of the favourite horse; but, concluding that his master be intoxicated, he prudently forbore to make any observations. sooner did the unfortunate traveller suspend that rapid motion, which he seemed to wish to annihilate, as far as possible, time space, in order to reach the place he had now attained, than it ed to him as if he would have given the world that seas and ts had lain between him and the house of his fathers, as well as only sister with whom he was now about to have a decisive view.

ut the place and the hour are arrived," he said, biting his lip anguish; "this explanation must be decisive; and whatever may attend it, suspense must be ended now, at once and for ever." entered the Castle, and took the light from the old domestic, hearing the clatter of his horse's feet, had opened the door to ve him.

my sister in her parlour?" he asked, but in so hollow a voice the old man only answered his question by another, "Was his ur well?"

uite well, Patrick—never better in my life," said Mowbray; and ng his back on the old man as if to prevent his observing whether untenance and his words corresponded, he pursued his way to ster's apartment. The sound of his step upon the passage d Clara from a reverie, perhaps a sad one; and she had trimmed mp, and stirred her fire, so slow did he walk, before he at length ed her apartment.

ou are a good boy, brother," she said, "to come thus early ; and I have some good news for your reward. The groom tched back Trimmer—He was lying by the dead hare, and he hased him as far as Drumlyford—the shepherd had carried him e shieling, till some one should claim him."

would he had hanged him, with all my heart!" said Mowbray. ow?—hang Trimmer?—your favourite Trimmer, that has beat hole country?—and it was only this morning you were half-cry- because he was amissing, and like to murder man and mother's

he better I like any living thing," answered Mowbray, "the reason I have for wishing it dead and at rest; for neither I, ything that I love, will ever be happy more."

ou cannot frighten me, John, with these flights," answered trembling, although she endeavoured to look unconcerned— have used me to them too often."

is well for you, then; you will be ruined without the shock of se."

much the better—We have been," said Clara,

" ' So constantly in poortith's sight,
The thoughts on't gie us little fright.'

I with honest Robert Burns."

—n Burns and his trash!" said Mowbray, with the impatience

of a man determined to be angry with everything but himself, was the real source of the evil.

"And why damn poor Burns?" said Clara, composedly, "it is his fault if you have not risen a winner, for that, I suppose, is cause of all this uproar."

"Would it not make any one lose patience," said Mowbray, hear her quoting the rhapsodies of a hob-nailed peasant, when a man is speaking of the downfall of an ancient house! Your ploughman suppose, becoming one degree poorer than he was born to be, would only go without his dinner, or without his usual potation of ale. His comrades would cry 'poor fellow!' and let him eat out of their hands and drink out of their bicker without scruple, till his own was again. But the poor gentleman—the downfallen man of rank—the degraded man of birth—the disabled and disarmed man of power—it is he that is to be pitied, who loses not merely drink and dinner but honour, situation, credit, character, and name itself!"

"You are declaiming in this manner in order to terrify me," said Clara: "but, friend John, I know you and your ways, and I have made up my mind upon all contingencies that can take place. I will tell you more—I have stood on this tottering pinnacle of rank and fashion, if our situation can be termed such, till my head is dizzy with the instability of my eminence; and I feel the strange desire of throwing myself down, which the devil is said to put into folk's heads when they stand on the top of steeples—at least, I had rather the plumes were over."

"Be satisfied, then; if that will satisfy you—the plunge is over, and we are—what they used to call it in Scotland—gentle beggar-creatures to whom our second, and third, and fourth, and fifth cousins may, if they please, give a place at the side-table, and a seat in the carriage with the lady's-maid, if driving backwards does not make us sick."

"They may give it to those who will take it," said Clara; "but I am determined to eat bread of my own buying—I can do two things, and I am sure some one or other of them will bring me the little money I will need. I have been trying, John, for several months, how little I can live upon, and you would laugh if you heard how low I have brought the account."

"There is a difference, Clara, between fanciful experiments and real poverty—the one is a masquerade, which we can end when we please, the other is wretchedness for life."

"Methinks, brother," replied Miss Mowbray, "it would be better for you to set me an example how to carry my good resolutions into effect, than to ridicule them."

"Why, what would you have me do?" said he, fiercely—"be a postilion, or rough-rider, or whipper-in?—I don't know anything that my education, as I have used it, has fitted me for—and some of my old acquaintance would, I daresay, give me a crock of drink now and then for old acquaintance' sake."

"This is not the way, John, that men of sense think or speak of in serious misfortunes," answered his sister; "and I do not believe this is so serious as it is your pleasure to make it."

"Believe the very worst you can think," replied he, "and you will believe bad enough!—You have neither a guinea, nor a house, nor a friend;—pass but a day, and it is a chance that you will not have another."

"My dear John, you have drunk hard—rode hard."

"Yes—such tidings deserved to be carried express, especially to a young lady who receives them so well," answered Mowbray, bitterly. "I suppose, now, it will make no impression, if I were to tell you that I have it in your power to stop all this ruin?"

"By consummating my own, I suppose—Brother, I said you could make me tremble, but you have found a way to do it."

"What, you expect I am again to urge you with Lord Etherington's courtship?—That *might* have saved all, indeed—But that day and age is over."

"I am glad of it, with all my spirit," said Clara; "may it take with that we can quarrel about!—But till this instant I thought it for this very point that this long voyage was bound, and that you were endeavouring to persuade me of the reality of the danger of the voyage, in order to reconcile me to the harbour."

"You are mad, I think, in earnest," said Mowbray; "can you really think it absurd as to rejoice that you have no way left to relieve yourself and me from ruin, want, and shame!"

"From shame, brother?" said Clara. "No shame in honesty, I hope."

"That is according as folks have used their prosperity, Clara—I speak to the point.—There are strange reports going below—Heaven! they are enough to disturb the ashes of the dead! Were I to mention them, I should expect our poor mother to enter the tomb.—Clara Mowbray, can you guess what I mean?"

"I was with the utmost exertion, yet in a faltering voice, that she was unable, after an ineffectual effort, to utter the monosyllable, "*No!*"—O my Heaven! I am ashamed—I am even *afraid* to express my meaning!—Clara, what is there which makes you so obstinately reject every proposal of marriage?—Is it that you feel yourself unworthy to be the wife of an honest man?—Speak out!—Evil Fame has been busy with your reputation—speak out!—Give me the right answer, and I will smother their lies down the throats of the inventors, and when I know them to-morrow I shall know how to treat those who reflect on you. The fortunes of our house are ruined, but I will argue shall slander its honour.—Speak—speak, wretched girl!—Are you silent?"

"Stay at home, brother," said Clara; "stay at home, if you regard our house's honour—murder cannot mend misery—Stay at home, let them talk of me as they will,—they can scarcely say worse of me than I deserve!"

"The passions of Mowbray, at all times ungovernably strong, were now sent inflamed by wine, by his rapid journey, and the previously agitated state of his mind. He set his teeth, clenched his hands, and stood on the ground, as one that forms some horrid resolution, and uttered almost unintelligibly, "It were charity to kill her!"

"No! no! no!" exclaimed the terrified girl, throwing herself

at his feet; "Do not kill me, brother! I have wished for death—thought of death—prayed for death—but oh! it is frightful to think that he is near—Oh! not a bloody death, brother, nor by your hand."

She held him close by the knees as she spoke, and expressed, by her looks and accents the utmost terror. It was not, indeed, without reason; for the extreme solitude of the place, the violent and inflamed passions of her brother, and the desperate circumstances, which he had reduced himself, seemed all to concur to render so horrid an act of violence not an improbable termination of this strange interview.

Mowbray folded his arms, without unclenching his hands, or raising his head, while his sister continued on the floor, clasping him round the knees with all her strength, and begging piteously for her life and for mercy.

"Fool!" he said, at last, "let me go!—Who cares for thy worthless life?—who cares if thou live or die? Live, if thou canst—and the hate and scorn of every one else as much as thou art mine!"

He grasped her by the shoulder, with one hand pushed her from him, and as she arose from the floor, and again pressed to throw her arms around his neck, he repulsed her with his arm and hand, with a push—or blow—it might be termed either one or the other,—violent enough, in her weak state, to have again extended her on the ground. He had not a chair received her as she fell. He looked at her with ferocity, grappled a moment in his pocket; then ran to the window, and throwing the sash violently up, thrust himself as far as he could without falling, into the open air. Terrified, and yet her feelings of his unkindness predominating even above her fears, Clara continued to exclaim,

"Oh, brother, say you did not mean this!—Oh, say you did not mean to strike me!—Oh, whatever I have deserved, be not you an executioner!—It is not manly—it is not natural—there are but few of us in the world!"

He returned no answer; and, observing that he continued to stare at himself from the window, which was in the second story of the building, and overlooked the court, a new cause of apprehension mingled in some measure, with her personal fears. Timidly, and with streaming eyes and uplifted hands, she approached her angry brother, fearfully, yet firmly, seized the skirt of his coat, as if anxious to serve him from the effects of that despair, which so lately seemed turned against her, and now against himself.

He felt the pressure of her hold, and drawing himself angrily back, asked her sternly what she wanted.

"Nothing," she said, quitting her hold of his coat; "but what did he look after so anxiously?"

"After the devil!" he answered, fiercely; then drawing her to his head, and taking her hand, "By my soul, Clara—it is true, if there was truth in such a tale!—He stood by me just now, and urged me to murder thee!—What else could have put my hunting-lion into my thought?—Ay, by God, and into my very hand—at such a moment?—Yonder, I could almost fancy I see him fly, the wood, the rock, and the water, gleaming back the dark-red furnace-l

is shed on them by his dragon wings!—By my soul, I can hardly lose it fancy!—I can hardly think but that I was under the influence of an evil spirit—under an act of fiendish possession! But as he is, gone let him be—and thou, too ready implement of his will, be thou gone after him!” He drew from his pocket his right hand, which had all this time held his hunting-knife, and threw the implement into the courtyard as he spoke; then, with a mournful quietness and solemnity of manner, shut the window, and led his sister by the hand to her usual seat, which her tottering steps scarce enabled her to reach. “Clara,” he said, after a pause of mournful silence, “we must think what is to be done, without passion or violence—there must be something for us in the dice yet, if we do not throw away our lives. A blot is never a blot till it is hit—dishonour concealed is dishonour in some respects.—Dost thou attend to me, wretched girl?” he said, suddenly and sternly raising his voice.

“Yes, brother—yes indeed, brother,” she hastily replied, terrified by delay again to awaken his ferocious and ungovernable temper.

“Thus it must be, then,” he said. “You must marry this Etherington—there is no help for it, Clara—You cannot complain of what your own vice and folly have rendered inevitable.”

“But brother——” said the trembling girl.

“Be silent. I know all that you would say. You love him not, I would say. I love him not, no more than you. Nay, what is it, he loves you not—if he did, I might scruple to give you to him, you being such as you have owned yourself. But you shall wed him out of hate, Clara—or for the interest of your family—or for any reason you will—But wed him you shall and must.”

“Brother—dearest brother—one single word!”

“Not of refusal or expostulation—that time is gone by,” said her brother. “When I believed thee what I thought thee this morning, I might advise you, but I could not compel. But since the honour of your family has been disgraced by your means, it is but just that, if possible, its disgrace should be hidden; and it shall,—ay, if selling you for a slave would tend to conceal it!”

“You do worse—you do worse by me! A slave in an open market might be bought by a kind master—you do not give me that chance—you have sold me to one who——”

“Fear him not, nor the worst that he can do, Clara,” said her brother. “I know on what terms he marries; and, being once more your brother, as your obedience in this matter will make me, he had better tear his flesh from his bones with his own teeth, than do thee any displeasure! By Heaven, I hate him so much—for he has outwitted me every way—that methinks it is some consolation that he cannot receive in thee the excellent creature I thought thee!—And as thou art, thou art still too good for him.”

Encouraged by the more gentle and almost affectionate tone in which her brother spoke, Clara could not help saying, although still in a whisper, “I trust it will not be so—I trust he will consider his own condition, honour, and happiness, better than to share in mine.”

"Let him utter such a scruple if he dares," said Mowbray—"But he dares not hesitate—he knows that the instant he recedes from addressing you he signs his own death-warrant or mine, or perhaps that of both; and his views, too, are of a kind that will not be relinquished on a point of scrupulous delicacy merely. Therefore, Clara, nourish no such thought in your heart as that there is the least possibility of your escaping such a marriage! The match is booked. Swear you will not hesitate."

"I will not," she said, almost breathlessly, terrified lest he would about to start once more into the fit of unbridled fury which had before seized on him.

"Do not even whisper or hint an objection, but submit to your fate, for it is inevitable."

"I will—submit," answered Clara, in the same trembling accent.

"And I," he said, "will spare you—at least at present—and may be for ever—all inquiry into the guilt which you have confessed. Rumours there were of misconduct, which reached my ears even in England; but who could have believed them that looked on you daily, and witnessed your late course of life?—On this subject I will be at present silent—perhaps may not again touch on it—that is, you do nothing to thwart my pleasure, or to avoid the fate which circumstances render unavoidable.—And now it is late—retire to your bed—think on what I have said as what necessity has determined, and not my selfish pleasure."

"He held out his hand, and she placed, but not without reluctance, her trembling palm in his. In this manner, and with a sense of mournful solemnity, as if they had been in attendance upon a funeral, he handed his sister through a gallery hung with old family pictures, at the end of which was Clara's bedchamber. The moon, which at this moment looked out through a huge volume of mustering clouds that had long been boding storm, fell on the two last descendants of that ancient family, as they glided hand in hand, more like the ghosts of the deceased than like living persons, through the hall and amongst the portraits of their forefathers. The same thoughts were in the breasts of both, but neither attempted to speak while they cast a flitting glance on the pallid and decayed representations, "How little did these anticipate this catastrophe of the house!" At the door of the bedroom Mowbray quitted his sister's hand, and said, "Clara, you should to-night thank God, that save you from a great danger, and me from a deadly sin."

"I will," she answered—"I will. And, as if her terror had been anew excited by this allusion to what had passed, she bid her brother hastily good-night, and was no sooner within her apartment, than she heard her turn the key in the lock and draw two bolts besides.

"I understand you, Clara," muttered Mowbray between his teeth as he heard one bar drawn after another. "But if you could escape yourself under Ben Nevis you could not escape what fate has been destined for you.—Yes!" he said to himself, as he walked with a slow and moody pace through the moonlit gallery, uncertain whether to return to the parlour, or to retire to his solitary chamber, when his attention was roused by a noise in the courtyard.

The night was not indeed far advanced, but it had been so long Shaws-Castle received a guest, that, had Mowbray not heard rolling of wheels in the courtyard, he might have thought rather usebreakers than of visitors. But, as the sound of a carriage horses was distinctly heard, it instantly occurred to him that the it must be Lord Etherington, come, even at this late hour, to x with him on the reports which were current to his sister's pre-e, and perhaps to declare his addresses to her were at an end. r to know the worst, and to bring matters to a decision, he re-ed the apartment he had just left, where the lights were still ing, and, calling loudly to Patrick, whom he heard in commun-with the postilion, commanded him to show the visitor to Mowbray's parlour. It was not the light step of the young man which came tramping, or rather stamping, through the passage, and up the two or three steps at the end of it. Neither it Lord Etherington's graceful figure which was seen when oor opened, but the stout square substance of Mr Peregrine hwood.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A RELATIVE.

Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd.

Deserted Village.

ARTING at the unexpected and undesired apparition which pre-ed itself, in the manner described at the end of the last chapter, bray yet felt, at the same time, a kind of relief, that his meeting Lord Etherington, painfully decisive as that meeting must be, or a time suspended. So it was with a mixture of peevishness nternal satisfaction that he demanded what had procured him onour of a visit from Mr Touchwood at this late hour.

Necessity, that makes the old wife trot," replied Touchwood ; choice of mine, I assure you—Gad, Mr Mowbray, I would rather crossed Saint Gothard, than run the risk I have done to-night, ling through your breakneck roads in that d——d old wheel-w. On my word, I believe I must be troublesome to your r for a draught of something—I am as thirsty as a coal-heaver s working by the piece. You have porter, I suppose, or good cotch twopenny?"

th a secret execration on his visitor's effrontery, Mr Mowbray ed the servant to put down wine and water, of which Touch-mixed a gobletful and drank it off.

Ve are a small family," said his entertainer ; "and I am seldom me—still more seldom receive guests when I chance to be here m sorry I have no malt liquor, if you prefer it."

refer it?" said Touchwood, compounding, however, another of sherry and water, and adding a large piece of sugar, to

correct the hoarseness which, he observed, his night journey might bring on,—“to be sure I prefer it, and so does everybody, except Frenchmen and dandies.—No offence, Mr Mowbray, but you should order a hogshead from Meux—the brown-stout, wired down for exportation to the colonies, keeps for any length of time, and in every climate—I have drank it where it must have cost a guinea a quart, if interest had been counted.”

“When I *expect* the honour of a visit from you, Mr Touchwood I will endeavour to be better provided,” answered Mowbray; “your present arrival has been without notice, and I would be glad to know if it has any particular object.”

“This is what I call coming to the point,” said Mr Touchwood, thrusting out his stout legs, accoutred as they were with the ancient defences, called boot-hose, so as to rest his heels upon the fender. “Upon my life, the fire turns the best flower in the garden at this season of the year—I’ll take the freedom to throw on a log.—Is it not a strange thing, by-the-by, that one never sees a fagot in Scotland? You have much small wood, Mr Mowbray; I wonder you do not get some fellow from the midland counties to teach your people how to make a fagot.”

“Did you come all the way to Shaws-Castle,” asked Mowbray, rather testily, “to instruct me in the mystery of fagot-making?”

“Not exactly—not exactly,” answered the undaunted Touchwood, “but there is a right and a wrong way in everything—a word by the way, on any useful subject, can never fall amiss.—As for my immediate and more pressing business, I can assure you, that it is of a nature sufficiently urgent, since it brings me to a house in which I am much surprised to find myself.”

“The surprise is mutual, sir,” said Mowbray, gravely observing that his guest made a pause; “it is full time you should explain it.”

“Well, then,” replied Touchwood; “I must first ask you whether you have never heard of a certain old gentleman, called Scroggie, who took it into what he called his head, poor man, to be ashamed of the name he bore, though owned by many honest and respectable men, and chose to join it to your surname of Mowbray, as having more chivalrous Norman sounding, and, in a word, a gentlemanly twang with it?”

“I have heard of such a person, though only lately,” said Mowbray. “Reginald Scroggie Mowbray was his name. I have reason to consider his alliance with my family as undoubted, though he seems to mention it with a sneer, sir. I believe Mr S. Mowbray regulated his family settlements very much upon the idea that his was to intermarry with our house.”

“True, true, Mr Mowbray,” answered Touchwood; “and certainly it is not your business to lay the axe to the root of the general tree that is like to bear golden apples for you—Ha!”

“Well, well, sir—proceed—proceed,” answered Mowbray.

“You may also have heard that this old gentleman had a fancy who would willingly have cut up the said family-tree into fagots, who thought Scroggie sounded as well as Mowbray, and had a fancy for an imaginary gentility, which was to be attained by

re of one's natural name, and the disowning, as it were, of actual relations?"

"I think I have heard from Lord Etherington," answered Mowbray, "to whose communications I owe most of my knowledge about Scrogie people, that old Mr Scrogie Mowbray was unfortunate on, who thwarted his father on every occasion,—would embrace opportunity which fortunate chances held out, of raising and enriching the family,—had imbibed low tastes, wandering and singular objects of pursuit,—on account of which his father disinherited him."

"That is very true, Mr Mowbray," proceeded Touchwood, "that this did happen to fall under his father's displeasure, because he was dissipated and flummery,—loved better to make money as an adventurer, than to throw it away as an idle gentleman,—would have called a coach when walking on foot would serve the turn,—would have looked the Royal Exchange better than St James's Park. In his father's eyes, he was a prodigal, because he had the qualities for squandering the estate, rather than those for squandering it."

"All this may be quite correct, Mr Touchwood," replied Mowbray, "but pray, what has this Mr Scrogie, Junior, to do with you?"

"To do with you or me!" said Touchwood, as if surprised at the question; "he has a great deal to do with me at least, since I am a Scrogie man myself."

"The devil you are!" said Mowbray, opening wide his eyes in surprise. "Mr A—a—your name is Touchwood—P. Touchwood—I suppose, or Peter—I read it so in the subscription book at the Well."

"Peregrine, sir, Peregrine—my mother would have me so christened, because Peregrine Pickle came out during her confinement; my poor foolish father acquiesced, because he thought it genteel, derived from the Willoughbys. I don't like it, and I always called myself P. short, and you might have remarked an S. also before the name—I use at present P. S. Touchwood. I had an old acquaintance in the city, who loved his jest—He always called me Postscript Touchwood."

"Then, sir," said Mowbray, "if you are really Mr Scrogie, *tout va bien*, I must suppose the name of Touchwood is assumed?"

"What the devil!" replied Mr P. S. Touchwood, "do you suppose there is no name in the English nation will couple up legitimately with my paternal name of Scrogie, except your own, Mr Mowbray?—I assure you I got the name of Touchwood, and a pretty good deal of money along with it, from an old godfather, who admired me for my spirit in sticking by commerce."

"Well, sir, every one has his taste—many would have thought it better to enjoy a hereditary estate, by keeping your father's name of Scrogie, than to have gained another by assuming a stranger's name of Touchwood."

"Who told you Mr Touchwood was a stranger to me?" said the other; "for aught I know, he had a better title to the duties of a godfather from me, than the poor old man who made such a fool of him-"

self, by trying to turn gentleman in his old age. He was my grandfather's partner in the great firm of Touchwood, Scrogie, and Co. Let me tell you there is as good inheritance in house as in field—man's partners are his fathers and brothers, and a head clerk may be likened to a kind of first cousin."

"I meant no offence whatever, Mr Touchwood Scrogie."

"Scrogie Touchwood, if you please," said the senior; "the scrogie branch first, for it must become rotten ere it become touchwood—ha, ha, ha!—you take me."

"A singular old fellow this," said Mowbray, to himself, "and speaks in all the dignity of dollars; but I will be civil to him, till I can see what he is driving at.—You are facetious, Mr Touchwood," he proceeded aloud. "I was only going to say, that although you set no value upon your connection with my family, yet I cannot forget that such a circumstance exists; and therefore I bid you heartily welcome to Shaws-Castle."

"Thank ye, thank ye, Mr Mowbray—I knew you would see things right. To tell you the truth, I should not have cared much to come a-begging for your acquaintance and cousinship, and go forth; but that I thought you would be more tractable in your adversity, than was your father in his prosperity."

"Did you know my father, sir?" said Mowbray.

"Ay, ay—I came once down here, and was introduced to him. I saw your sister and you when you were children—had thoughts of making my will then, and should have clapped you both in before I set out to double Cape Horn. But, gad, I wish my poor father had seen the reception I got! I did not let the old gentleman, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, that was then, smoke my money-bags, that might have made him more tractable—not but that we were on indifferent well for a day or two, till I got a hint that my room was wanted, for that the Duke of Devil-knows-what was expected, and my bed was to serve his valet-de-chambre.—'Oh, damn you, gentle cousins!' said I, and off I set on the pad round the world again, and thought no more of the Mowbrays till a year or so ago."

"And, pray, what recalled us to your recollection?"

"Why," said Touchwood, "I was settled for some time at Smyrna (for I turn the penny go where I will—I have done a little business even since I came here;)—but being at Smyrna, as I said, I became acquainted with Francis Tyrrel."

"The natural brother of Lord Etherington," said Mowbray.

"Ay, so called," answered Touchwood; "but by and by he is more likely to prove the Earl of Etherington himself, and t'other fellow the bastard."

"The devil he is!—You surprise me, Mr Touchwood."

"I thought I should—I thought I should—Faith, I am sometimes surprised myself at the turn things take in this world. But the turn is not the less certain—the proofs are lying in the strong chest of the house at London, deposited there by the old Earl, who repented his roguery to Miss Martigny long before he died, but had not lived long enough to do his legitimate son justice till the sexton had hoisted him."

"Good Heaven, sir!" said Mowbray; "and did you know all this, that I was about to bestow the only sister of my house upon an impostor?"

"What was my business with that, Mr Mowbray?" replied Touchwood; "you would have been very angry had any one suspected me of not being sharp enough to look out for yourself and your sister both. Besides, Lord Etherington, bad enough as he may be in other respects, was, till very lately, no impostor, or an innocent man, for he only occupied the situation in which his father had placed him."

"And, indeed, when I understood, upon coming to England, that he was gone down here, and, as I conjectured, to pay his addresses to your sister, to say truth, I did not see he could do better. He was a poor fellow that was about to cease to be a lord and a wealthy man; was it not very reasonable that he should make the most of dignity while he had it? and if, by marrying a pretty girl in possession of his title, he could get possession of the good estate of Nettlewood, why, I could see nothing in it but a very pretty piece of breaking his fall."

"Very pretty for him, indeed, and very convenient too," said Mowbray; "but pray, sir, what was to become of the honour of my family?"

"Why, what was the honour of your family to me?" said Touchwood; "unless it was to recommend your family to my care, that I disinherited on account of it. And if this Etherington, or Bulmer, had been a good fellow, I would have seen all the Mowbrays ever wore broad cloth at Jericho before I had interfered."

"I am really much indebted to your kindness," said Mowbray, smiling.

"More than you are aware of," answered Touchwood; "for, though I thought this Bulmer, even when declared illegitimate, might be a reasonable good match for your sister, considering the expense which was to accompany the union of their hands; yet, now we have discovered him to be a scoundrel—every way a scoundrel—I did not wish any decent girl to marry him, were they to get all the shire, instead of Nettlewood. So I have come to put you

to the strangeness of the news, which Touchwood so bluntly commended, made Mowbray's head turn round like that of a man who is dizzy at finding himself on the verge of a precipice. Touchwood observed his consternation, which he willingly construed into a knowledge of his own brilliant genius.

"Take a glass of wine, Mr Mowbray," he said, complacently; "or a glass of old sherry—nothing like it for clearing the ideas—do not be afraid of me, though I come thus suddenly upon you, with such surprising tidings—you will find me a plain, simple, ordinary man, that have my faults and my blunders, like other people. I acknowledge that much travel and experience have made me somewhat of a busybody, because I find I can do things better than other people, and I love to see folk stare—it's a way I have got. After all, I am *un bon diable*, as the Frenchman says; and here we come four or five hundred miles to lie quiet among you all,

and put all your little matters to rights, just when you think they are most desperate."

"I thank you for your good intentions," said Mowbray; "but I must needs say, that they would have been more effectual had you been less cunning in my behalf, and frankly told me what you knew of Lord Etherington; as it is, the matter has gone fearfully far. I have promised him my sister—I have laid myself under personal obligations to him—and there are other reasons why I fear I must keep my word to this man, earl or no earl."

"What!" exclaimed Touchwood, "would you give up your sister to a worthless rascal, who is capable of robbing the post-office, and murdering his brother, because you have lost a trifle of money from him? Are you to let him go off triumphantly, because he is a gamester as well as a cheat?—You are a pretty fellow, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's—you are one of the happy sheep that go out for wool and come home shorn. Egad, you think yourself a millstone, and turn out a sack of grain—You flew abroad a hawk, and have come home a pigeon—You snarled at the Philistines, and they have drawn your eye-teeth with a vengeance!"

"This is all very witty, Mr Touchwood," replied Mowbray; "but wit will not pay this man Etherington, or whatever he is, so many hundreds as I have lost to him."

"Why, then, wealth must do what wit cannot," said old Touchwood; "I must advance for you, that is all. Look ye, sir, I do go afoot for nothing—if I have laboured, I have reaped—and, like the fellow in the old play, 'I have enough, and can maintain my humour'—it is not a few hundreds or thousands either can stand twixt old P. S. Touchwood and his purpose; and my present purpose is to make you, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, a free man of the for ever. You still look grave on it, young man?—Why, I trust you are not such an ass as to think your dignity offended, because the plebeian Scrogie comes to the assistance of the terribly great and old house of Mowbray?"

"I am indeed not such a fool," answered Mowbray, with his eyes still bent on the ground, "to reject assistance that comes to me as a rope to a drowning man—but there is a circumstance—" he stopped short and drank a glass of wine—"a circumstance to which it is most painful to me to allude—but you seem my friend—and I cannot intimate to you more strongly my belief in your professed regard than by saying, that the language held by Lady Penelope Penfeather on my sister's account renders it highly proper that she were settled in life; and I cannot but fear that the breaking off of the affair with this man might be of great prejudice to her at this moment. They will have Nettlewood, and they may live separately—she has offered to make settlements to that effect, even on the very day of marriage. Her condition as a married woman will put her above scandal, and above necessity, from which, I am sorry to say, I can only hope long to preserve her."

"For shame!—for shame!—for shame!" said Touchwood, multiplying his words thicker than usual on each other; "would you sell your own flesh and blood to a man like this Bulmer, whose

is now laid before you, merely because a disappointed old maid scandal of her? A fine veneration you pay to the honoured of Mowbray! If my poor, old, simple father had known what ners of these two grand syllables could have stooped to do for insuring subsistence, he would have thought as little of the Mowbrays as of the humble Scrogies. And, I daresay, the lady is just such another—eager to get married—no matter to

excuse me, Mr Touchwood," answered Mowbray; "my sister's sentiments so very different from what you ascribe to her, and I parted on the most unpleasant terms, in consequence of pressing this man's suit upon her. God knows that I only did so because I saw no other outlet from this most unpleasant dilemma. Since you are willing to interfere, sir, and aid me to disentangle these complicated matters, which have, I own, been made worse by my rashness, I am ready to throw the matter completely into your hands, just as if you were my father arisen from the dead. Nevertheless, I must needs express my surprise at the extent of your interference in these affairs."

"You speak very sensibly, young man," said the traveller; "and I, by my intelligence, I have for some time known the finesses of this Mr Bulmer as perfectly as if I had been at his elbow when he was showing all his dog's tricks with this family. You would hardly suspect," he continued, in a confidential tone, "that what you were talking of a while ago should take place, has in some sense actually taken place, and that the marriage ceremony has really passed betwixt your sister and this pretended Lord Etherington?"

"Have a care, sir!" said Mowbray, fiercely; "do not abuse my patience—this is no place, time, or subject for impertinent jesting." "I live by bread, I am serious," said Touchwood; "Mr Cargill officiated at the ceremony; and there are two living witnesses who can tell them say the words, 'I, Clara, take you, Francis,' or whatever the officiating church puts in place of that mystical formula." "It is impossible," said Mowbray; "Cargill dared not have done such a thing—a clandestine proceeding, such as you speak of, would have cost him his living. I'll bet my soul against a horse-shoe, it is all imposition; and you come to disturb me, sir, amid my distress, with legends that have no more truth in them than the Koran."

"There are some true things in the Alkoran (or rather, the Koran, the Al is merely the article prefixed), but let that pass—I will not trouble your wonder higher before I am done. It is very true, that your sister was indeed joined in marriage with this same Bulmer, who calls himself by the title of Etherington; but it is just as true, that the marriage is not worth a maravedi, for she believed him at the time to be another person—to be, in a word, Francis Tyrrel, who is wholly what the other pretends to be, a nobleman of fortune." "I cannot understand one word of all this," said Mowbray. "I will go to my sister instantly, and demand of her if there be any real foundation for these wonderful averments."

"Not go," said Touchwood, detaining him, "you shall have a

full explanation from me; and, to comfort you under your perplexity, I can assure you that Cargill's consent to celebrate the nuptials was only obtained by an aspersion thrown on your sister's character, which induced him to believe that speedy marriage would be the best means of saving her reputation; and I am convinced in my own mind it is only the revival of this report which has furnished the foundation of Lady Penelope's chattering."

"If I could think so"—said Mowbray, "if I could but think this truth—and it seems to explain, in some degree, my sister's mysterious conduct—if I could but think it true, I should fall down and worship you as an angel from heaven!"

"A proper sort of angel," said Touchwood, looking modestly down on his short, sturdy supporters—"Did you ever hear of an angel boot-hose? Or, do you suppose angels are sent to wait on broken down horse-jockeys?"

"Call me what you will, Mr Touchwood," said the young man, "only make out your story true, and my sister innocent!"

"Very well spoken, sir," answered the senior, "very well spoken. But then I understand you are to be guided by my prudence and experience? None of your G—damme doings, sir—your duels or your drubbings. Let *me* manage the affair for you, and I will bring you through with a flowing sail."

"Sir, I must feel as a gentleman," said Mowbray.

"Feel as a fool," said Touchwood, "for that is the true condition. Nothing would please this Bulmer better than to fight through his rogueries—he knows very well that he who can slit a pistol-ball the edge of a penknife will always preserve some sort of reputation amidst his scoundrelism—but I shall take care to stop that hole. You must be a man of sense, and listen to the whole of this strange story."

Mowbray sat down accordingly; and Touchwood in his own turn, and with many characteristic interjectional remarks, gave him an account of the early loves of Clara and Tyrrel—of the reasons which induced Bulmer at first to encourage their correspondence, in his belief that his brother would, by a clandestine marriage, altogether ruin himself with his father—of the change which took place in his views when he perceived the importance annexed by the old Earl to the union of Miss Mowbray with his apparent heir—of the desperate stratagem which he endeavoured to play off, by substituting himself in the room of his brother—and all the consequences, which it is unnecessary to resume here, as they are detailed at length by the perpetrator himself, in his correspondence with Captain Jekyl.

When the whole communication was ended, Mowbray, astonished and stupified by the wonders he had heard, remained for some time in a sort of reverie, from which he only started to ask what evidence could be produced of a story so strange.

"The evidence," answered Touchwood, "of one who was an agent in all these matters, from first to last—as complete a rogue, I believe, as the devil himself, with this difference, that our mortal does not, I believe, do evil for the sake of evil, but for the sake of profit which attends it. How far this plea will avail him in a

science I cannot tell; but his disposition was so far akin to
nity, that I have always found my old acquaintance as ready
good as harm, providing he had the same *agio* upon the trans-

in my soul," said Mowbray, "you must mean Solmes! whom I
long suspected to be a deep villain—and now he proves traitor
ot. How the devil could you get into his intimacy, Mr Touch-

ne case was particular," said Touchwood. "Mr Solmes, too
a member of the community to be satisfied with managing the
which his master intrusted to him, adventured in a little
ess on his own account; and thinking, I suppose, that the late
f Etherington had forgotten fully to acknowledge his services,
et to his son, he supplied that defect by a small check on our
for £100, in name, and bearing the apparent signature, of the
ed. This small mistake being detected, Mr Solmes, *porteur*
little billet, would have been consigned to the custody of a
treet officer, but that I found means to relieve him, on condition
making known to me the points of private history which I
ust been communicating to you. What I had known of Tyrrel
rna had given me much interest in him, and you may guess
not lessened by the distresses which he had sustained through
other's treachery. By this fellow's means, I have counter-
d all his master's fine schemes. For example, as soon as I
d Bulmer was coming down here, I contrived to give Tyrrel an
mous hint, well knowing he would set off like the devil to thwart
nd so I should have the whole *dramatis personæ* together, and
hem all off against each other, after my own pleasure."

at that case," said Mr Mowbray, "your expedient brought about
ncontre between the two brothers, when both might have fallen."
an't deny it—can deny it," answered Scrogie, a little discounten-
—"a mere accident—no one can guard every point.—Egad,
had like to have been baffled again, for Bulmer sent the lad
who is not such a black sheep neither but what there are some
hairs about him, upon a treaty with Tyrrel, that my secret agent
ot admitted to. Gad, but I discovered the whole—you will
guess how."

robably not easily, indeed, sir," answered Mowbray; for your
s of intelligence are not the most obvious, any more than your
of acting the most simple or most comprehensible."

would not have it so," said Touchwood; "simple men perish
ir simplicity—I carry my eye-teeth about me.—And for my
of information—why, I played the eavesdropper, sir—listened
w my landlady's cupboard with the double door—got into it as
s done many a time. Such a fine gentleman as you would
cut a man's throat, I suppose, than listen at a cupboard door,
the object were to prevent murder."

cannot say I should have thought of the expedient, certainly,
id Mowbray.

lid though," said Scrogie, "and learned enough of what was
on, to give Jekyl a hint that sickened him of his commission,

I believe—so the game is all in my own hands. Bulmer has no one to trust to but Solmes, and Solmes tells me everything.”

Here Mowbray could not suppress a movement of impatience.

“I wish to God, sir, that, since you were so kind as to interest yourself in affairs so intimately concerning my family, you had been pleased to act with a little more openness towards me. Here has been for weeks the intimate of a damned scoundrel, whose throat ought to have cut for his scandalous conduct to my sister. Here has I been rendering her and myself miserable, and getting myself cheated every night by a swindler, whom you, if it had been your pleasure, could have unmasked by a single word. I do all justice to your intentions, sir; but, upon my soul, I cannot help wishing you had conducted yourself with more frankness and less mystery; and I am truly afraid your love of dexterity has been too much for your ingenuity, and that you have suffered matters to run into such a skean confusion, as you yourself will find difficulty in unravelling.”

Touchwood smiled, and shook his head in all the conscious pride of superior understanding. “Young man,” he said, “when you have seen a little of the world, and especially beyond the bounds of this narrow island, you will find much art and dexterity necessary in conducting these businesses to an issue, than occurs to a blind John Bull or a raw Scottishman. You will be then no stranger to the policy of life, which deals in mining and countermining,—now in making feints, now in thrusting with forthright passes. I look upon you, Mowbray, as a young man spoiled by staying at home, and keeping bad company; and will make it my business, if you submit yourself to my guidance, to inform your understanding so as to retrieve your estate.—Don’t—don’t answer me, sir! because I know too well, from experience, how young men answer on these subjects—they are conceited, as conceited as if they had been in all the four quarters of the world. I hate to be answered, sir, I hate it. And, to tell you the truth, it is because Tyrrel has a fancy of answering me that I rather make you my confidant on this occasion than him. I would have had him throw himself into my arms, and under my directions; but he hesitated—he hesitated, Mr Mowbray—and I despise hesitation. If he thinks he has wit enough to manage his own matters let him try it—let him try it. Not but I will do all that I can for him, in fitting time and place; but I will let him dwell in his perplexities and uncertainties for a little while longer. And so, Mr Mowbray, you see what sort of an odd fellow I am, and you can satisfy me at once whether you mean to come into my measures—only speak out once, sir, for I abhor hesitation.”

While Touchwood thus spoke Mowbray was forming his resolution internally. He was not so inexperienced as the senior supposed; at least he could plainly see that he had to do with an obstinate, capricious old man, who, with the best intentions in the world, chose to have everything in his own way; and like most petty politicians was disposed to throw intrigue and mystery over matters which much better be prosecuted boldly and openly. But he perceived, at the same time, that Touchwood, as a sort of relation, wealthy, childless, and disposed to become his friend, was a person to be conc-

the rather that the traveller himself had frankly owned that it Francis Tyrrel's want of deference towards him, which had for-, or at least abated, his favour. Mowbray recollected also that circumstances under which he himself stood did not permit him to flatter with returning gleams of good fortune. Subduing, therefore, the haughtiness of temper proper to him as an only son and he answered respectfully that, in his condition, the advice and assistance of Mr Scrogie Touchwood were too important not to be sacrificed at the price of submitting his own judgment to that of an experienced and sagacious friend.

"Well said, Mr Mowbray," replied the senior, "well said. Let Mowbray have the management of your affairs, and we will brush up for you without loss of time.—I must be obliged to you for this night, however—it is as dark as a wolf's mouth; and if I will give orders to keep the poor devil of a postilion, and his horse too, why, I will be the more obliged to you."

Mowbray applied himself to the bell. Patrick answered the call, and was much surprised when the old gentleman, taking the word from his entertainer's mouth, desired a bed to be got ready, with a fire in the grate; "for I take it, friend," he went on, "you have guests here very often.—And see that my sheets be not damp, bid the housemaid take care not to make the bed upon an exact level, but let it slope from the pillow to the footposts, at a declivity of about eighteen inches.—And hark ye—get me a jug of barley-water, to place by my bedside, with the squeeze of a lemon—or stay, I will make it as sour as Beelzebub—bring the lemon on a saucer, I will mix it myself."

Patrick listened like one of sense forlorn, his head turning like a weather-vane, alternately from the speaker to his master, as if to ask the question whether this was all reality. The instant that Touchwood ceased Mowbray added his fiat.

"Let everything be done to make Mr Touchwood comfortable, in any way he wishes."

"Aweel, sir," said Patrick, "I shall tell Mally, to be sure, and we will do our best, and—but it's unco late——"

"And therefore," said Touchwood, "the sooner we get to bed the better, my old friend. I, for one, must be stirring early—I have no business of life and death—it concerns you too, Mr Mowbray—but none of that till to-morrow. And let the lad put up his horses, and find him a bed somewhere."

Patrick here thought he had gotten upon firm ground for resistance, for which, displeased with the dictatorial manner of the old gentleman, he felt considerably inclined.

"Ye may catch us at that, if ye can," said Patrick; "there's nae sense in that—cattle come into our stables—What do we ken, but that they may be landed, as the groom says?"

"We must take the risk to-night, Patrick," said Mowbray, reluctantly enough—"unless Mr Touchwood will permit the horses to be taken back early next morning?"

"Not I, indeed," said Touchwood; "safe bind safe find—it may be a long way away and aye away and we shall have enough to do to-morrow."

morning. Moreover, the poor carrion are tired, and the merciful man is merciful to his beast; and, in a word, if the horses back to St Ronan's Well to-night, I go there for company."

It often happens, owing, I suppose, to the perversity of human nature, that subserviency in trifles is more difficult to a proud mind than compliance in matters of more importance. Mowbray, like other young gentlemen of his class, was finically rigid in his strict discipline, and even Lord Etherington's horses had not been admitted into that *sanctum sanctorum*, into which he now saw himself obliged to induct two wretched post-hacks. But he submitted with the best grace he could; and Patrick, while he left their presence with lifted-up hands and eyes, to execute the orders he had received, could scarcely help thinking that the old man must be the devil in disguise, since he could thus suddenly control his fiery master, even in the points which he had hitherto seemed to consider as of more vital importance.

"The Lord in his mercy haud a grip of this puir family! for that was born in it, am like to see the end of it." Thus ejaculated Patrick.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE WANDERER.

'Tis a naughty night to swim in.

King Lear.

THERE was a wild uncertainty about Mowbray's ideas, after he started from a feverish sleep on the morning succeeding this memorable interview, that his sister, whom he really loved as much as he was capable of loving anything, had dishonoured him and her name, and the horrid recollection of their last interview was the first idea which his walking imagination was thrilled with. Then came Touchwood's tale of exculpation—and he persuaded himself, or strove to do so, that Clara must have understood the charge he had brought against her as referring to her attachment to Tyrrel, and its fatal consequences. Again, still he doubted how that could be—still he feared that there must be more behind than her reluctance to confess the fraud which had been practised on her by Bulmer; and then, again, he strengthened himself in the first and more pleasing opinion by recollecting that, averse as she was to espouse the person proposed to her, it must have appeared to her the completion of ruin if he, Mowbray, should obtain knowledge of the clandestine marriage.

"Yes—O yes," he said to himself, "she would think that this story would render me more eager in the rascal's interest, as the best way of hushing up such a discreditable affair—faith, and she would have judged right too; for, had he actually been Lord Etherington, I do not see what else she could have done. But not being Lord Etherington, and an anointed scoundrel into the bargain, I will content myself with cudgelling him to death so soon as I can get out of the guardianship of this old, meddling, obstinate, se

l busybody.—Then, what is to be done for Clara?—This mock-age was a mere bubble, and both parties must draw stakes. kes this grave Don, who proves to be the stick of the right tree, all—so do not I, though there be something lord-like about

I was sure a strolling painter could not have carried it off so. may marry him, I suppose, if the law is not against it—then as the earldom, and the Oaklands, and Nettlewood, all at once. d, we should come in winners, after all—and, I daresay, this by Touchwood is as rich as a Jew—worth a hundred thousand ast.—He is too peremptory to be cut up for sixpence under a red thousand.—And he talks of putting me to rights—I must vince—must stand still to be curried a little—Only, I wish the may permit Clara's being married to this other earl.—A woman ot marry two brothers, that is certain;—but then, if she is not ed to the one of them in good and lawful form, there can be no bar r marrying the other, I should think—I hope the lawyers will talk nsense about it—I hope Clara will have no foolish scruples.— by my word, the first thing I have to hope is, that the thing is for it comes through but a suspicious channel. I'll away to Clara ntly—get the truth out of her—and consider what is to be done.” us partly thought and partly spoke the young Laird of St n's, hastily dressing himself, in order to inquire into the strange s of events which perplexed his imagination.

en he came down to the parlour where they had supped last , and where breakfast was prepared this morning, he sent for l who acted as his sister's immediate attendant, and asked, “if Mowbray was yet stirring?”

e girl answered, “she had not rung her bell.” t is past her usual hour,” said Mowbray, “but she was disturbed night. Go, Martha, tell her to get up instantly—say I have lent good news for her—or, if her head aches, I will come and hem to her before she rises—go like lightning.”

rtha went, and returned in a minute or two. “I cannot make mistress hear, sir, knock as loud as I will. I wish,” she added, that love of evil presage which is common in the lower ranks, t Miss Clara may be well, for I never knew her sleep so sound.” owbray jumped from the chair into which he had thrown himself, hrough the gallery, and knocked smartly at his sister's door; was no answer. “Clara, dear Clara!—Answer me but one—say but you are well. I frightened you last night—I had drinking wine—I was violent—forgive me!—Come, do not be—speak but a single word—say but you are well.”

made the pauses longer betwixt every branch of his address, ed sharper and louder, listened more anxiously for an answer; ngth he attempted to open the door, but found it locked, or icked secured. “Does Miss Mowbray always lock her door?” ked the girl.

ever knew her do it before, sir; she leaves it open that I may er, and open the window-shutters.”

e had too good reason for precaution last night, thought her er, and then remembered having heard her, bar the door.

"Come, Clara," he continued, greatly agitated, "do not be silly, if you will not open the door I must force it, that's all; for how can I tell but that you are sick, and unable to answer?—if you are only sullen, say so.—She returns no answer," he said, turning to the domestic, who was now joined by Touchwood.

Mowbray's anxiety was so great that it prevented his taking any notice of his guest, and he proceeded to say, without regarding his presence, "What is to be done?—she may be sick—she may be asleep—she may have swooned; if I force the door, it may terrify her to death in the present weak state of her nerves.—Clara, dear Clara, do but speak a single word, and you shall remain in your own room as long as you please."

There was no answer, Miss Mowbray's maid, hitherto too much fluttered and alarmed to have much presence of mind, now recollected a back-stair which communicated with her mistress's room from the garden, and suggested she might have gone out that way.

"Gone out," said Mowbray, in great anxiety, and looking at the heavy fog, or rather small rain, which blotted the November morning.—"Gone out, and in weather like this!—But we may get into her room from the back-stair."

So saying, and leaving his guest to follow or remain as he thought proper, he flew rather than walked to the garden, and found the private door which led into it, from the bottom of the back-stair above mentioned, was wide open. Full of vague but fearful apprehensions, he rushed up to the door of his sister's apartment, which opened from her dressing-room to the landing-place of the stairs; it was ajar, and that which communicated betwixt the bedroom and dressing-room was half open. "Clara, Clara!" exclaimed Mowbray, invoking her name rather in an agony of apprehension, than any longer hoping for a reply. And his apprehension was but too prophetic.

Miss Mowbray was not in that apartment; and, from the order in which it was found, it was plain she had neither undressed on the preceding night nor occupied the bed. Mowbray struck his forehead in an agony of remorse and fear. "I have terrified her to death," he said; "she has fled into the woods, and perished there."

Under the influence of this apprehension, Mowbray, after another hasty glance around the apartment, as if to assure himself that Clara was not there, rushed again into the dressing-room almost overturning the traveller, who, in civility, had not ventured to enter the inner apartment. "You are as mad as a *Hamako*,"¹ said the traveller, "let us consult together, and I am sure I can contrive——"

"Oh, d—n your contrivance!" said Mowbray, forgetting all proposed respect in his natural impatience, aggravated by his alarm, "if you had behaved straightforward, and like a man of common sense, this would not have happened!"

"God forgive you, young man, if your reflections are unjust," said the traveller, quitting the hold he had laid upon Mowbray's coat; "God forgive me too, if I have done wrong while endeavouring to

¹ A fool is so termed in Turkey.

the best!—But may not Miss Mowbray have gone down to the
? I will order my horses, and set off instantly.”

“Do, do,” said Mowbray, recklessly; “I thank you;” and hastily
rushing the garden, as if desirous to get rid at once of his visitor
his own thoughts, he took the shortest road to a little postern-
which led into the extensive copsewood, through some part of
which Clara had caused a walk to be cut to a little summer-house
of rough shingles, covered with creeping shrubs.

Mowbray hastened through the garden, he met the old man by
whom it was kept, a native of the south country, and an old depen-
dent on the family. “Have you seen my sister?” said Mowbray,
tossing his words on each other with the eagerness of terror.

“What’s your wull, St Ronan’s?” answered the old man, at once
slow of hearing, and slow of apprehension.

“Have you seen Miss Clara?” shouted Mowbray, and muttered
something or two at the gardener’s stupidity.

“In troth have I,” replied the gardener, deliberately; “what
will I sail me to see Miss Clara, St Ronan’s?”

“When, and where?” eagerly demanded the querist.

“Ou, just yestreen, after tey-time—afore ye cam hame yoursell
knocking sae fast,” said Joseph.

“I am as stupid as he, to put off my time in speaking to such an
idiot as cabbage-stock,” said Mowbray, and hastened on to the postern-
already mentioned, leading from the garden to what was usually
called Miss Clara’s walk. Two or three domestics, whispering to
each other, and with countenances that showed grief, fear, and sus-
picion, followed their master, desirous to be employed, yet afraid to
offer their services on the fiery young man.

In the little postern he found some traces of her he sought. The
key of Clara was left in the lock. It was then plain that she
must have passed that way; but at what hour, or for what purpose,
Mowbray dared not conjecture. The path, after running a quarter
of a mile or more through an open grove of oaks and sycamores,
ended at the verge of the large brook, and became there steep and
rough, difficult to the infirm, and alarming to the nervous; often
reaching the brink of a precipitous ledge of rock, which in this
place overhung the stream, in some places brawling and foaming in
its current, and in others seeming to slumber in deep and circular
pools. The temptations which this dangerous scene must have
excited an excited and desperate spirit came on Mowbray like the
onset of the Simoom, and he stood a moment to gather breath and
overcome these horrible anticipations, ere he was able to proceed.
His attendants felt the same apprehension. “Puir thing—puir
thing!—Oh, God send she may not have been left to hersell!—God
send she may have been upholden!” were whispered by Patrick to
the maidens, and by them to each other.

At this moment the old gardener was heard behind them, shouting,
“Master—St Ronan’s—Master—I have fund—I have fund——”
“Have you found my sister?” exclaimed the brother, with breath-
less anxiety.

The old man did not answer till he came up, and then, with his

usual slowness of delivery, he replied to his master's repeated inquiries, "Na, I haena fund Miss Clara, but I hae fund something wad be wae to lose—your braw hunting-knife."

He put the implement into the hand of its owner, who, recollecting the circumstances under which he had flung it from him last night and the now too probable consequences of that interview, bestowed on it a deep imprecation, and again hurled it from him into the brook. The domestics looked at each other, and recollecting each at the same time that the knife was a favourite tool of their master who was rather curious in such articles, had little doubt that his mind was affected, in a temporary way at least, by his anxiety on his sister's account. He saw their confused and inquisitive looks, and assuming as much composure and presence of mind as he could command, directed Martha, and her female companions, to return and search the walks on the other side of Shaws-Castle; and finally ordered Patrick back to ring the bell, "which," he said, assuming a confidence that he was far from entertaining, "might call Miss Mowbray home from some of her long walks." He farther desired his groom and horses might meet him at the Clattering Brig, so called from a noisy cascade which was formed by the brook, above which was stretched a small foot-bridge of planks. Having thus shaken off his attendants, he proceeded himself, with all the speed he was capable of exerting, to follow out the path in which he was at present engaged, which, being a favourite walk with his sister, she might perhaps have adopted from mere habit, when in a state of mind, which, he had too much reason to fear, must have put choice out of the question.

He soon reached the summer-house, which was merely a seat covered overhead and on the sides, open in front, and neatly paved with pebbles. This little bower was perched, like a hawk's nest, almost upon the edge of a projecting crag, the highest point of the line of rock which we have noticed; and had been selected by poor Clara, on account of the prospect which it commanded down the valley. One of her gloves lay on the small rustic table in the summer-house. Mowbray caught it eagerly up. It was drenched with wet—the preceding day had been dry; so that had she forgot it there in the morning, or in the course of the day, it could not have been in that state. She had certainly been there during the night, when it rained heavily. Mowbray, thus assured that Clara had been in this place while her passions and fears were so much afloat as they must have been at her flight from her father's house, cast a hurried and terrified glance from the brow of the precipice into the deep stream that eddied below. It seemed to him that, in the sullen roar of the water, he heard the last groans of his sister—the foam-flakes caught his eye, as they were a part of her garments. But a closer examination showed that there was no appearance of such a catastrophe. Descending the path on the other side of the bower, he observed a foot-print in a place where the clay was moist and tenacious, which, from the small size and the shape of the shoe, it appeared to him must be a trace of her whom he sought. He hurried forward, therefore, with as much speed as yet permitted him to look out keenly for similar impressions, of which it seemed to him he remarked several, although he

et than the former, being much obliterated by the quantity of that had since fallen,—a circumstance seeming to prove that al hours had elapsed since the person had passed.

length, through the various turnings and windings of a long omantic path, Mowbray found himself, without having received satisfactory intelligence, by the side of the brook called St n's Burn, at the place where it was crossed by foot-passengers, e Clattering Brig, and by horsemen through a ford a little

At this point the fugitive might have either continued her erings through her paternal woods, by a path which, after ng about a mile, returned to Shaws-Castle, or she might have ed the bridge, and entered a broken horseway, common to the e, leading to the Aultoun of St Ronan's.

wbray, after a moment's consideration, concluded that the last er most probable option. He mounted his horse, which the n had brought down according to order, and commanding the o return by the footpath, which he himself could not examine, oceeded to ride towards the ford. The brook was swollen g the night, and the groom could not forbear intimating to his r that there was considerable danger in attempting to cross it. Mowbray's mind and feelings were too high-strung to permit o listen to cautious counsel. He spurred the snorting and re- t horse into the torrent, though the water, rising high on the e side, broke both over the pommel and the croupe of his saddle. s by exertion of great strength and sagacity that the good ept the ford-way. Had the stream forced him down among ocks, which lie below the crossing-place, the consequences must een fatal. Mowbray, however, reached the opposite side in , to the joy and admiration of the servant, who stood staring n during the adventure. He then rode hastily towards the un, determined, if he could not hear tidings of his sister in that e, that he would spread the alarm, and institute a general n after her, since her elopement from Shaws-Castle could, in ase, no longer be concealed. We must leave him, however, in esent state of uncertainty, in order to acquaint our readers with ality of those evils, which his foreboding mind and disturbed ence could only anticipate.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CATASTROPHE.

What sheeted ghost is wandering through the storm ?

For never did a maid of middle earth

Choose such a time or spot to vent her sorrows.

Old Play.

EF, shame, confusion, and terror, had contributed to over- the unfortunate Clara Mowbray, at the moment when she l with her brother, after the stormy and dangerous interview it was our task to record in a former chapter. For years her

life, her whole tenor of thought, had been haunted by the terrible apprehension of a discovery, and now the thing which she feared had come upon her. The extreme violence of her brother, which went so far as to menace her personal safety, had united with the previous conflict of passions, to produce a rapture of fear, which probably left her no other free agency, than that which she derived from the blind instinct which urges flight, as the readiest resource in danger.

We have no means of exactly tracing the course of this unhappy young woman. It is probable she fled from Shaws-Castle, on hearing the arrival of Mr Touchwood's carriage, which she might mistake for that of Lord Etherington; and thus, while Mowbray was looking forward to the happier prospects which the traveller's narrative seemed to open, his sister was contending with rain and darkness amidst the difficulties and dangers of the mountain path which we have described. These were so great, that a young woman so delicately brought up must either have lain down exhausted, or have been compelled to turn her steps back to the residence she had abandoned. But the solitary wanderings of Clara had inured her to fatigue and to night-walks; and the deeper causes of terror which urged her to flight rendered her insensible to the perils of her way. She had passed the bower, as was evident from her glove remaining there, and had crossed the foot-bridge; although it was almost wonderful that, in so dark a night, she should have followed with such accuracy a track, where the missing a single turn by a cubit's length might have precipitated her into eternity.

It is probable that Clara's spirits and strength began in some degree to fail her after she had proceeded a little way on the road to the Aultoun; for she had stopped at the solitary cottage inhabited by the old female pauper, who had been for a time the hostess of the penitent and dying Hannah Irwin. Here, as the inmate of the cottage acknowledged, she had made some knocking, and she owned she had heard her moan bitterly, as she entreated for admission. The old hag was one of those whose hearts adversity turns to very stone, and obstinately kept her door shut, impelled more probably by general hatred to the human race, than by the superstitious fears which seized her; although she perversely argued that she was startled at the supernatural melody and sweetness of tone by which the benighted wanderer made her supplication. She admitted that, when she heard the poor petitioner turn from the door, her heart was softened, and she did intend to open with the purpose of offering her at least a shelter; but that before she could "hipple" the door, and get the bar taken down," the unfortunate supplicant was not to be seen; which strengthened the old woman's opinion that the whole was a delusion of Satan.

It is conjectured that the repulsed wanderer made no other attempt to awaken pity or obtain shelter, until she came to Mr Cargill Manse, in the upper room of which a light was still burning, owing to a cause which requires some explanation.

The reader is aware of the reasons which induced Bulmer, or the titular Lord Etherington, to withdraw from the country the sole business, as he conceived, who could, or at least who might, choose

witness to the fraud which he had practised on the unfortunate Mowbray. Of three persons present at the marriage, besides parties, the clergyman was completely deceived. Solmes he contented to be at his own exclusive devotion; and therefore, if by his this Hannah Irwin could be removed from the scene, he could plausibly, that all evidence to the treachery which he had used would be effectually stifled. Hence his agent, Solmes, had secured a commission, as the reader may remember, to effect her removal without loss of time, and had reported to his master that his plan had been effectual.

Solmes, since he had fallen under the influence of Touchwood, constantly employed in counteracting the schemes which he had most active in forwarding, while the traveller enjoyed (to his exquisite gratification) the amusement of countermining as Bulmer could mine, and had in prospect the pleasing anticipation of blowing up the pioneer with his own petard. For this purpose soon as Touchwood learned that his house was to be applied to the original deeds left in charge by the deceased Earl ofington, he expedited a letter, directing that only the copies should be sent, and thus rendered nugatory Bulmer's desperate design of possessing himself of that evidence. For the same reason, Solmes announced to him his master's anxious wish to have Hannah Irwin conveyed out of the country, he appointed him to take the sick woman to be carefully transported to the Manse, where Cargill was easily induced to give her temporary refuge.

His good man, who might be termed an Israelite without guile, the distress of the unhappy woman would have proved a sufficient recommendation; nor was he likely to have inquired whether her complaint might not be infectious, or to have made any of those other usual investigations which are sometimes clogs upon the bounty and liberality of more prudent philanthropists. But, to interest him further, Mr Touchwood informed him by letter that the patient (otherwise unknown to him) was possessed of certain most material information affecting a family of honour and consequence, and that he himself, with Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's in the quality of a mediator, intended to be at the Manse that evening, to take her deposition upon this important subject. Such, indeed, was the traveller's purpose, which might have been carried into effect, but for his own self-important love of manœuvring on the one part, and his very impatience of Mowbray on the other, which, as the reader knows, sent the one at full gallop to Shaws-Castle, and obliged the other to follow him post haste. This necessity he intimated to the man by a note, which he despatched express as he himself was about to act of stepping into the chaise.

He requested that the most particular attention should be paid to the deposition—promised to be at the Manse with Mr Mowbray early the next morning—and, with the lingering and inveterate self-conceit which always induced him to conduct everything with his own hand, he begged his friend, Mr Cargill, not to proceed to take the sick woman's declaration or confession until he arrived, unless in case of emergency.

It had been an easy matter for Solmes to transfer the invalid from the wretched cottage to the clergyman's Manse. The first appearance of the associate of much of her guilt had indeed terrified her, but he scrupled not to assure her, that his penitence was equal to her own, and that he was conveying her where their joint deposit would be formally received, in order that they might, so far as possible, atone for the evil of which they had been jointly guilty. He also promised her kind usage for herself, and support for her children; and she willingly accompanied him to the clergyman's residence, he himself resolving to abide in concealment the issue of the mystery, without again facing his master, whose star, as he well discerned, was about to shoot speedily from its exalted sphere.

The clergyman visited the unfortunate patient, as he had done frequently during her residence in his vicinity, and desired that she might be carefully attended. During the whole day she seemed better; but, whether the means of supporting her exhausted frame had been too liberally administered, or whether the thoughts which gnawed her conscience had returned with double severity when she was released from the pressure of immediate want, it is certain that about midnight, the fever began to gain ground, and the persons placed in attendance on her came to inform the clergyman, that she was deeply engaged with the siege of Ptolemais, that she doubted if the woman would live till morning, and that she had something lay heavy at her heart, which she wished, as the emissary expressed it, "to make a clean breast of" before she died, or lost possession of her senses.

Awakened by such a crisis, Mr Cargill at once became a man of this world, clear in his apprehension, and cool in his resolution, as always was when the path of duty lay before him. Comprehending from the various hints of his friend Touchwood, that the matter was of the last consequence, his own humanity, as well as inexperience, dictated his sending for skilful assistance. His man-servant accordingly despatched on horseback to the Well for Doctor Quackben; while, upon the suggestion of one of his maids, "that Mrs Dod was an uncommon skeely body about a sick-bed," the wench was dismissed to supplicate the assistance of the gudewife of the Cleik, which she was not, indeed, wont to refuse whenever it could be useful. The male emissary proved, in Scottish phrase, a "corbie messenger;" for either he did not find the doctor, or he found him more engaged than to attend the sick-bed of a pauper, at a request which promised such slight remuneration as that of a parish minister. The female ambassador was more successful; for, though she found our friend Luckie Dods preparing for bed at an hour unusually late, in consequence of some anxiety on account of Mr Touchwood's expected absence, the good old dame only growled a little about the minister's fancies in taking pair bodies into his own house; and then, instantly donning cloak, hood, and pattens, marched down the street with all the speed of the good Samaritan, one maid bearing the lamp before her, while the other remained to keep the house, and to attend to the wants of Mr Tyrrel, who engaged willingly to sit up to receive Mr Touchwood.

But ere Dame Dods had arrived at the Manse, the patient

moned Mr Cargill to her presence, and required him to write confession while she had life and breath to make it.

"For I believe," she added, raising herself in the bed, and rolling her eyes wildly around, "that, were I to confess my guilt to one of a sacred character, the Evil Spirit, whose servant I have been, he would carry away his prey, both body and soul, before they had parted from each other, however short the space that they must have been in partnership!"

Mr Cargill would have spoken some ghostly consolation, but she rebuffed him with pettish impatience, "Waste not words—waste not words!—Let me speak that which I must tell, and sign it with my name, and do you, as the more immediate servant of God, and thereupon bound to bear witness to the truth, take heed you write that I tell you, and nothing else. I desired to have told this to St Ronan's—I have even made some progress in telling it to others—I am glad I broke short off—for I know you, Josiah Cargill, that you have long forgotten me."

"It may be so," said Cargill. "I have indeed no recollection of you." "You once knew Hannah Irwin, though," said the sick woman; "she was companion and relation to Miss Clara Mowbray, and who was present with her on that sinful night, when she was wedded in the ark of St Ronan's."

"Do you mean to say that you are that person?" said Cargill, holding the candle so as to throw some light on the face of the sick woman. "I cannot believe it."

"No?" replied the penitent; "there is indeed a difference between wickedness in the act of carrying through its successful machinations, and wickedness surrounded by all the horrors of a deathbed?"

"Do not yet despair," said Cargill. "Grace is omnipotent—to do this is in itself a great crime."

"Do it so!—I cannot help it—my heart is hardened, Mr Cargill; there is something here," she pressed her bosom, "which tells me that, with prolonged life and renewed health, even my present sins would be forgotten, and I should become the same I have been before. I have rejected the offer of grace, Mr Cargill, and not through ignorance, for I have sinned with my eyes open. Care not for me, then, who am a mere outcast." He again endeavoured to comfort her, but she continued, "Or if you really wish my welfare, relieve my bosom of that which presses it, and it may be that I shall then be better able to listen to you. You say you remember the promise which was required of you—how much you urged that it was against your canonical rules—if I name the argument to which I alluded—and remind you of your purpose, to acknowledge your confession to your brethren in the church courts, to plead your guilt, and submit to their censure, which you said could not be a punishment—you will be then aware that, in the voice of the miserable Hannah Irwin, you hear the words of the once artful, gay, and specious woman."

"I allow it—I allow it!" said Mr Cargill; "I admit the tokens; I believe you to be indeed her whose name you assume."

"Then one painful step is over," said she; "for I would ere now have lightened my conscience by confession, saving for the cur pride of spirit, which was ashamed of poverty, though it had shrunk from guilt.—Well—In these arguments, which were urged you by a youth best known to you by the name of Francis Tyrrel, though more properly entitled to that of Valentine Bulmer, we perpetrated on you a base and gross deception.—Did you not hear some sigh?—I hope there is no one in the room—I trust I shall die when my confession is signed and sealed, without my name being dragged through the public—I hope ye bring not in your menials to gaze on my abject misery—I cannot brook that."

She paused and listened; for the ear, usually deafened by pain, sometimes, on the contrary, rendered morbidly acute. Mr Carr assured her there was no one present but himself. "But oh, my unhappy woman!" he said, "what does your introduction prepare me to expect?"

"Your expectation, be it never so ominous, shall be fully satisfied.—I was the guilty confidant of the false Francis Tyrrel.—Clara is the true one.—When the fatal ceremony passed the bride and clergyman were deceived alike—and I was the wretch—the fiend who, aiding another yet blacker, if blacker could be—mainly helped to accomplish this cureless misery!"

"Wretch!" exclaimed the clergyman, "and had you not then done enough?—Why did you expose the betrothed of one brother to come the wife of another?"

"I acted," said the sick woman, "only as Bulmer instructed me, but I had to do with a master of the game. He contrived, by the agent Solmes, to match me with a husband imposed on me by devices as a man of fortune,—a wretch, who maltreated me—persecuted me—sold me.—Oh! if fiends laugh, as I have heard they do, what a jubilee of scorn will there be, when Bulmer and I enter the place of torture!—Hark!—I am sure of it—some one draws breath as if shuddering!"

"You will distract yourself if you give way to these fancies. Be calm—speak on—but, oh! at last, and for once, speak the truth!"

"I will, for it will best gratify my hatred against him, who, having first robbed me of my virtue, made me a sport and a plunder to the basest of the species. For that I wandered here to unmask him, I had heard he again stirred his suit to Clara, and I came here to tell the young Mowbray the whole.—But do you wonder that I shrunk from doing so till this last decisive moment?—I thought of my conduct to Clara, and how could I face her brother?—And yet I hated her after I learned her utter wretchedness—her deep misery, even upon madness—I hated her not then. I was sorry that she was not to fall to the lot of a better man than Bulmer;—and I pitied her after she was rescued by Tyrrel, and you may remember it was I who prevailed on you to conceal her marriage."

"I remember it," answered Cargill, "and that you alleged, as a reason for secrecy, danger from her family. I did conceal it, I repeat, because reports that she was again to be married reached my ears."

"Well, then," said the sick woman, "Clara Mowbray ought to have been told the truth from the first."

me—since what ill I have done her was inevitable, while good I did was voluntary.—I must see her, Master Cargill—t see her before I die—I shall never pray till I see her—I never profit by word of godliness till I see her! If I cannot the pardon of a worm like myself, how can I hope for that

started at these words with a faint scream; for slowly, and feeble hand, the curtains of the bed opposite to the side at Cargill sat were opened, and the figure of Clara Mowbray, her long hair drenched and dripping with rain, stood in the g by the bedside. The dying woman sat upright, her eyes g from their sockets, her lips quivering, her face pale, her sted hands grasping the bed-clothes, as if to support herself, oking as much aghast as if her confession had called up the tion of her betrayed friend.

annah Irwin,” said Clara, with her usual sweetness of tone, arly friend—my unprovoked enemy!—Betake thee to Him who ardon for us all, and betake thee with confidence—for I pardon freely as if you had never wronged me—as freely as I desire n pardon.—Farewell—Farewell!”

retired from the room ere the clergyman could convince him- at it was more than a phantom which he beheld. He ran down -he summoned assistants, but no one could attend his call; for ep ruckling groans of the patient satisfied every one that she eathing her last; and Mrs Dods, with the maid-servant, ran e bed-room to witness the death of Hannah Irwin, which shortly ook place.

t event had scarcely occurred, when the maid-servant, who had ft in the inn, came down in great terror to acquaint her mis- hat a lady had entered the house like a ghost, and was dying in rrel's room. The truth of the story we must tell our own way. he irregular state of Miss Mowbray's mind, a less violent e than that which she had received from her brother's arbi- violence, added to the fatigues, dangers, and terrors of her walk, might have exhausted the powers of her body, and ed those of her mind. We have before said, that the lights clergyman's house had probably attracted her attention, the temporary confusion of a family; never remarkable regularity, she easily mounted the stairs, and entered the sick er undiscovered, and thus overheard Hannah Irwin's confes- tale sufficient to have greatly aggravated her mental malady. ave no means of knowing whether she actually sought Tyrrel, ther it was, as in the former case, the circumstance of a light rning where all around was dark, that attracted her; but her parition was close by the side of her unfortunate lover, then engaged in writing, when something suddenly gleamed on a ld-fashioned mirror, which hung on the wall opposite. He up, and saw the figure of Clara, holding a light (which she en from the passage) in her extended hand. He stood for an with his eyes fixed on this fearful shadow, ere he dared to und on the substance which was thus reflected. When he

did so, the fixed and pallid countenance almost impressed him with the belief that he saw a vision, and he shuddered when, stooping beside him, she took his hand. "Come away!" she said, in a hurried voice—"Come away, my brother follows to kill us both. Come, Tyrrel, let us fly—we shall easily escape him.—Hannah Irwin is before—but, if we are overtaken, I will have no more fighting—I must promise me that we shall not—we have had but too much of that—but you will be wise in future."

"Clara Mowbray!" exclaimed Tyrrel. "Alas! is it thus?—Stay, do not go," for she turned to make her escape—"stay—stay—sit down."

"I must go," she replied, "I must go—I am called—Hannah Irwin is gone before to tell all, and I must follow. Will you not let me go?—Nay, if you will hold me by force, I know I must sit down—but you will not be able to keep me for all that."

A convulsion fit followed, and seemed, by its violence, to explain that she was indeed bound for the last and darksome journey. The maid, who at length answered Tyrrel's earnest and repeated summons, fled terrified at the scene she witnessed, and carried to Manse the alarm which we before mentioned.

The old landlady was compelled to exchange one scene of sorrow for another, wondering within herself what fatality could have marked this single night with so much misery. When she arrived at home, what was her astonishment to find there the daughter of the house, which, even in their alienation, she had never ceased to love, in a state little short of distraction, and tended by Tyrrel, whose state of mind seemed scarce more composed than that of the unhappy patient. The oddities of Mrs Dods were merely the rust which had accumulated upon her character, but without impairing its natural strength and energy; and her sympathies were not of a kind altogether enough to disable her from thinking and acting as decisively as the circumstances required.

"Maister Tyrrel," she said, "this is nae sight for men folk—maun rise and gang to another room."

"I will not stir from her," said Tyrrel—"I will not remove from either now, or as long as she or I may live."

"That will be nae lang space, Maister Tyrrel, if ye wunna be ruled by common sense."

Tyrrel started up, as if half comprehending what she said, but remained motionless.

"Come, come," said the compassionate landlady; "do not sit looking on a sight sair enough to break a harder heart than your own—hinny—your ain sense tells ye, ye canna stay here—Miss Clara shall be weel cared for, and I'll bring word to your room-door frae you in an hour to half-hour how she is."

The necessity of the case was undeniable, and Tyrrel suffered himself to be led to another apartment, leaving Miss Mowbray to the care of the hostess and her female assistants. He counted the hours in an agony, less by the watch than by the visits which Mrs Dods, faithful to her promise, made from interval to interval, to tell that Clara was not better—that she was worse—and, at last, that she did not think that she could live over morning. It required all

catory influence of the good landlady to restrain Tyrrel, who, and cold on common occasions, was proportionally fierce and uous when his passions were afloat, from bursting into the room, scertaining, with his own eyes, the state of the beloved patient. ngth there was a long interval—an interval of hours—so long, d, that Tyrrel caught from it the flattering hope that Clara, and that sleep might bring refreshment both to mind and body. Dods, he concluded, was prevented from moving, for fear of dis- g her patient's slumber; and, as if actuated by the same feel- hich he imputed to her, he ceased to traverse his apartment, as itation had hitherto dictated, and throwing himself into a chair, re to move even a finger, and withheld his respiration as much ssible, just as if he had been seated by the pillow of the patient. ing was far advanced, when his landlady appeared in his room a grave and anxious countenance.

"Tyrrel," she said, "ye are a Christian man."
"Hush, hush, for Heaven's sake!" he replied; "you will disturb Mowbray."

"Nothing will disturb her, puir thing," answered Mrs Dods; "I have muckle to answer for that brought her to this."

"They have—they have indeed," said Tyrrel, striking his fore-
"and I will see her avenged on every one of them!—Can I er?"

"Better not—better not," said the good woman; but he burst from and rushed into the apartment.

"Life gone?—Is every spark extinct?" he exclaimed eagerly to ntry surgeon, a sensible man, who had been summoned from thorn in the course of the night. The medical man shook his -Tyrrel rushed to the bedside, and was convinced by his own hat the being, whose sorrows he had both caused and shared, ow insensible to all earthly calamity. He raised almost a of despair, as he threw himself on the pale hand of the corpse, with tears, devoured it with kisses, and played for a short time rt of a distracted person. At length, on the repeated expos- on of all present, he suffered himself to be again conducted to er apartment, the surgeon following, anxious to give such sad lation as the case admitted of.

"You are so deeply concerned for the untimely fate of this lady," he said, "it may be some satisfaction to you, though a choly one, to know, that it has been occasioned by a pressure e brain, probably accompanied by a suffusion; and I feel author- n stating, from the symptoms, that if life had been spared a would, in all probability, never have returned. In such a case, e most affectionate relation must own, that death, in compari- life, is a mercy."

"Mercy!" answered Tyrrel; "but why, then, is it denied to me? ow—I know!—My life is spared till I revenge her."

He started from his seat, and hurried eagerly down-stairs. But, was about to rush from the door of the inn, he was stopped by wood, who had just alighted from a carriage, with an air of anxiety imprinted on his features, very different from their

usual expression. "Whither would ye? Whither would ye?" said, laying hold of Tyrrel, and stopping him by force.

"For revenge—for revenge!" said Tyrrel. "Give way, I charge you, on your peril!"

"Vengeance belongs to God," replied the old man, "and his blood has fallen.—This way—this way," he continued, dragging Tyrrel into the house. "Know," he said, so soon as he had led or forced him into a chamber, "that Mowbray of St Ronan's has met Bulmer within this half hour, and has killed him on the spot."

"Killed?—whom?" answered the bewildered Tyrrel.

"Valentine Bulmer, the titular Earl of Etherington."

"You bring tidings of death to the house of death," answered Tyrrel; "and there is nothing in this world left that I should care for."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CONCLUSION.

Here come we to our close—for that which follows
Is but the tale of dull unvaried misery.
Steep crags and headlong lins may court the pencil,
Like sudden haps, dark plots, and strange adventures;
But who would paint the dull and fog-wrapt moor,
In its long track of sterile desolation?

Old Play.

WHEN Mowbray crossed the brook, as we have already detailed, his mind was in that wayward and uncertain state which seeks something whereon to vent the self-engendered rage with which his labours, like a volcano before eruption. On a sudden a shot or two followed by loud voices and laughter, reminded him he had promised at that hour, and in that sequestered place, to decide a bet respecting pistol-shooting, to which the titular Lord Etherington, Jekyl, Captain MacTurk, to whom such a pastime was peculiarly congenial, were parties as well as himself. The prospect this recollection afforded him, of vengeance on the man whom he regarded as the author of his sister's wrongs, was, in the present state of his mind, too tempting to be relinquished; and, setting spurs to his horse, he rushed through the copse to the little glade, where he found the other parties, who, despairing of his arrival, had already begun their amusement. A jubilee shout was set up as he approached.

"Here Comes Mowbray, dripping, by Cot, like a watering-pot," said Captain MacTurk.

"I fear him not," said Etherington (we may as well still call him so); "he has ridden too fast to have steady nerves."

"We shall soon see that, my Lord Etherington, or rather Valentine Bulmer," said Mowbray, springing from his horse, and throwing the bridle over a bough of the tree.

"What does this mean, Mr Mowbray?" said Etherington, drawing himself up, while Jekyl and Captain MacTurk looked at each other in surprise.

t means, sir, that you are a rascal and an impostor," replied Mowbray, "who have assumed a name to which you have no right." That, Mr Mowbray, is an insult I cannot carry farther than this," said Etherington.

If you had been willing to do so, you should have carried with it something still harder to be borne," answered Mowbray.

Enough, enough, my good sir; no use in spurring a willing steed. Jekyl, you will have the kindness to stand by me in this matter?"

Certainly, my lord," said Jekyl.

And, as there seems to be no chance of taking up the matter amicably," said the pacific Captain MacTurk, "I will be most happy, to assist my worthy friend, Mr Mowbray of St Ronan's, with my countenance and advice. Very good chance that we were provided with the necessary weapons, since it would have been an unpleasant thing to have such an affair long upon the stomach, any longer than to settle it without witnesses."

I would fain know first," said Jekyl, "what all this sudden heat has arisen about."

About nothing," said Etherington, "except a mare's nest of Mr Mowbray's discovering. He always knew his sister played the madman, and he has now heard a report, I suppose, that she has likewise in her time played the — fool."

Oh, crimini!" cried Captain MacTurk, "my good Captain, let us be reasonable and measuring out—for, by my soul, if these sweetmeats are passing between them, it is only the two ends of a hankercher that can serve the turn—Cot tamm!"

With such friendly intentions the ground was hastily meted out. Mowbray was well known as an excellent shot; and the Captain offered him to Jekyl of a mutchkin of Glenlivat that both would fall by the first fire. The event showed that he was nearly right; for the bullet of Lord Etherington grazed Mowbray's temple at the very end of time that Mowbray's pierced his heart. He sprung a yard from the ground, and fell down a dead man. Mowbray stood fixed like a pillar of stone, his arm dropped to his side, his hand still clutched on the weapon of death, reeking at the touch-hole and the trigger. Jekyl ran to raise and support his friend, and Captain MacTurk, having adjusted his spectacles, stooped on one knee to kiss him in the face. "We should have had Dr Quackleben here," said MacTurk, wiping his glasses, and returning them to the shagreen case, though it would have been only for form's sake—for he is as dead as a door-nail, poor boy. But come, Mowbray, my bairn," he said, taking him by the arm, "we must be gangin' our ain gate, you and I, before waur comes of it. I have a bit poney here, and you have a horse till we get to Marchthorn. Captain Jekyl, I wish you a good morning. Will you have my umbrella back to the inn, for I foresee it is going to rain?"

Mowbray had not ridden a hundred yards with his guide and companion, when he drew his bridle, and refused to proceed a step farther till he had learned what had become of Clara. The Captain went on to find he had a very untractable pupil to manage, when, while

they were arguing together, Touchwood drove past in his chaise. As soon as he recognised Mowbray, he stopped the carriage to inform him that his sister was at the Aultoun, which he learned from finding there had been a messenger sent from there to the Well for medical assistance, which could not be afforded, Esculapius of the place, Dr Quackleben, having been privately married to Mrs Blower on that morning, by Mr Chatterly, and having set out on the usual nuptial tour.

In return for this intelligence, Captain MacTurk communicated the fate of Lord Etherington. The old man earnestly pressed instant flight, for which he supplied at the same time ample means, engaged to furnish every kind of assistance and support to the unfortunate young lady; and representing to Mowbray that if he staid in the vicinity, a prison would soon separate them. Mowbray and his companion then departed southward upon the spur, reached London in safety, and from thence went together to the Peninsula, where war was then at the hottest.

There remains little more to be told. Mr Touchwood is still forming plans which have no object, and accumulating a fortune, which he has apparently no heir. The old man had endeavoured to fix this character, as well as his general patronage, upon Tyrrel, but the attempt only determined the latter to leave the country; nor has he been since heard of, although the title and estates of Etherington lie vacant for his acceptance. It is the opinion of many that he has entered into a Moravian mission, for the use of which he had previously drawn considerable sums.

Since Tyrrel's departure no one pretends to guess what old Touchwood will do with his money. He often talks of his disappointment, but can never be made to understand, or at least to admit, that they were in some measure precipitated by his own talent for intrigue and manœuvring. Most people think that Mowbray of St Ronan will be at last his heir. That gentleman has of late shown a quality which usually recommends men to the favour of rich relations, namely, a close and cautious care of what is already his own. Captain MacTurk's military ardour having revived when they came within smell of gunpowder, the old soldier contrived not only to get himself on full pay, but to induce his companion to serve for so long a time as a volunteer. He afterwards obtained a commission, and nothing could be more strikingly different than was the conduct of the young Laird of St Ronan's and of Lieutenant Mowbray. The former, as we know, was gay, venturous, and prodigal; the latter lived on his pay, and even within it—denied himself comforts, and often decencies, when doing so could save a guinea; and turned pale with apprehension, if, on any extraordinary occasion, he ventured sixpence a corner at whist. This meanness, or closeness of disposition, prevents his holding the high character to which his bravery and attention to his regimental duties might otherwise entitle him. The same close and accurate calculation of pounds, shillings, and pence, marked his communications with his agent, Meiklewham, who might otherwise have had better pickings out of the estate of St Ronan's, which is now at nurse, and thriving.

especially since some debts, of rather an usurious character, been paid up by Mr Touchwood, who contented himself with moderate usage.

the subject of this property, Mr Mowbray, generally speaking, such minute directions for acquiring and saving, that his old instance, Mr Winterblossom, tapping his morocco snuff-box the sly look which intimated the coming of a good thing, wont to say, that he had reversed the usual order of transfor-on, and was turned into a grub after having been a butterfly. r all, this narrowness, though a more ordinary modification of spirit of avarice, may be founded on the same desire of acqui- which in his earlier days sent him to the gaming-table.

t there was one remarkable instance in which Mr Mowbray rted from the rules of economy, by which he was guided in all s. Having acquired, for a large sum of money, the ground h he had formerly feued out for the erection of the hotel, ng-houses, shops, &c., at St Ronan's Well, he sent positive rs for the demolition of the whole, nor would he permit the ex- ce of any house of entertainment on his estate, except that in Aultoun, where Mrs Dods reigns with undisputed sway, her er by no means improved either by time, or her arbitrary dispo- n by the total absence of competition.

hy Mr Mowbray, with his acquired habits of frugality, thus oyed a property which might have produced a considerable ne, no one could pretend to affirm. Some said that he remem- d his own early follies, and others that he connected the build- with the misfortunes of his sister. The vulgar reported that l Etherington's ghost had been seen in the ball-room, and the ed talked of the association of ideas. But it all ended in this, Mr Mowbray was independent enough to please himself, and such was Mr Mowbray's pleasure.

le little watering-place has returned to its primitive obscurity; lions and lionesses, with their several jackalls, blue surtouts, bluer stockings, fiddlers and dancers, painters and amateurs, rs and critics, dispersed like pigeons by the demolition of a ot, have sought other scenes of amusement and rehearsal, and deserted ST RONAN'S WELL.¹

See Note H. *Meg Dods.*

END OF ST RONAN'S WELL.

NOTES TO ST RONAN'S WELL.

Note A, p. 13. BUILDING-FEUS IN SCOTLAND.

In Scotland, a village is erected upon a species of landright, very different from copyhold so frequent in England. Every alienation or sale of landed property must be made in the shape of a feudal conveyance, and the party who acquires it holds the property in an absolute and perfect right of property in the fief, while he discharges the stipulations of the vassal, and, above all, pays the feu-duties. The vassal or tenant of a site of the smallest cottage holds his possession as absolutely as the proprietor whose large estate it is perhaps scarce a perceptible portion. By dint of excellent laws, the sasines, or deeds of delivery of such fiefs, are placed in record in such a manner that every burden affecting the property can be seen for payment of a very moderate fee; so that a person proposing to lend money upon it, knows exactly the nature and extent of his security.

From the nature of these landrights being so explicit and secure, the Scotch people have been led to entertain a jealousy of building-leases, of however long duration. Not long ago, a great landed proprietor took the latter mode of disposing of some ground near a thriving town in the west country. The number of years for which the lease was settled at nine hundred and ninety-nine. All was agreed to, and the lease was ordered to be drawn. But the tenant, as he walked down the avenue, began to reflect that the lease, though so very long as to be almost perpetual, nevertheless had a termination; and that after the lapse of a thousand years, lacking one, the extinction of his family and representatives with the estate would cease. He took a great deal at the thought of the loss to be sustained by his posterity a thousand years hence; and going back to the house of the gentleman who feued the ground, he demanded a new lease. He readily obtained, the additional term of fifty years to be added to the lease.

Note B, p. 52. THE DARK LADYE.

The Dark Ladye is one of those tantalising fragments, in which Mr Coleridge has used us what exquisite powers of poetry he has suffered to remain uncultivated. Let us be thankful for what we have received, however. The unfashioned ore, drawn from a mine, is worth all to which art can add its highest decorations, when drawn from abundant sources. The verses beginning the poem, which are published separately, are said to have soothed the last hours of Mr Fox. They are the stanzas entitled *Lo*

Note C, p. 102. KETTLE OF FISH.

A kettle of fish is a *fête-champêtre* of a particular kind, which is to other *champêtres* what the piscatory eclogues of Brown or Sannazario are to pastoral. A large caldron is boiled by the side of a salmon river, containing a quantity of fish thickened with salt, to the consistence of brine. In this the fish is plunged when taken, and eaten by the company *fronde super viridi*. This is accounted the best mode of eating salmon by those who desire to taste the fish in a state of extreme freshness. Others prefer it after being kept a day or two, when the curd melts into oil, and the fish becomes richer and more luscious. The more judicious gastronomes eat no sauce than a spoonful of the water in which the salmon is boiled, together with pepper and vinegar.

Note D, p. 135. MAGO-PICO.

a satire, very popular even in Scotland, at least with one party, was composed at the expense of a reverend presbyterian divine, of whom many stories are preserved. Mr Pyet, the Mago-Pico of the tale, minister of Dunbar. The work is now known in Scotland, and not at all in England, though written with much strong coarse humour, resembling the style of Arbuthnot. It was composed by Mr Urton, a military chaplain. The distresses attending Mago-Pico's bachelor life are stated:—

At the same time I desire you would only figure out to yourself his situation in his celibacy in the ministerial charge—a house lying all heaps upon heaps; his house made, swarming with fleas, and very cold on the winter nights; his sheep's-head to be eaten for wool and hair, his broth singed, his bread mouldy, his lamb and mutton scouthered, his house neither washed nor plastered; his black stockings darned with white worsted above the shoes; his butter made into cat's hams; his cheese one of mites and maggots, and full of large avenues for rats and mice to play at hide-and-seek and make their nests in. Frequent were the admonitions he had given his servants on this score, and every now and then he was turning them off; but still it was the worst, and in the meanwhile the poor man was the sufferer. At any rate, matrimony must turn to his account, though his wife should prove to him nothing but a creature of the feminine gender, with a tongue in her head, and ten fingers on her hands, to clear out the papers of the housemaid, not to mention the convenience of a man's having it in his power lawfully to beget sons and daughters in his own house."—*Memoirs of Mago-Pico. Second Edition. Edinburgh, 1761, p. 19.*

Note E, p. 164. THE ARNAULTS.

The Arnaults, or Albanese," says Lord Byron, "struck me by their resemblance to the Highlanders of Scotland, in dress, figure, and manner of living. Their very countenances seem Caledonian, but a milder climate. The kilt, though white, the spare form, their dialect Celtic in the sound, and their hardy habits, all carried me back to Morven."—*Notes to the Second Chapter of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

Note F, p. 267. DOGS TRAINED TO THEFT.

There were several instances of this dexterity, but especially those which occurred in the celebrated case of Murdison and Millar in 1773. These persons, a sheep-farmer and a shepherd, settled in the vale of Tweed, commenced and carried on for some time an extensive system of devastation on the flocks of their neighbours. A dog belonging to Millar was so well trained, that he had only to show him during the day the flock of sheep which he desired to have; and when dismissed at night for the purpose, he went right to the pasture where the flock had fed, and carried off the quantity he pleased. He then drove them before him by the most secret paths to Murdison's house, where the dishonest master and servant were in readiness to receive the booty. The dog's tricks were remarkable. In the first place, that if the dog, when thus dishonestly employed, actually met his master, he observed great caution in recognising him, as if he had been afraid of bringing him under suspicion; secondly, that he showed a dislike to the illegal transactions in which he was engaged were not of a nature to be done by daylight. The sheep which he was directed to drive were often reluctant to leave their own pastures, and sometimes the intervention of rivers and other obstacles rendered their progress peculiarly difficult. On such occasions, Yarrow continued his efforts to drive his plunder forward, until the day began to dawn, a signal which, he perceived, rendered it necessary for him to desert his spoil, and slink homeward by the most secret road. It is generally said this accomplished dog was hanged along with his master; but the truth is, he survived him long, in the service of a man in Leithen, and was said afterwards to have shown little of the wonderful instinct exhibited in the case of Millar.

In another instance of similar sagacity, a friend of mine discovered in a beautiful little dog which he had purchased from a dealer in the canine race. When he entered a shop he was not long in observing that his little companion made it a rule to follow at a short interval, and to estrange itself from his master so much as to appear totally unconnected with him. And when he left the shop it was the dog's custom to remain close by him till it could find opportunity of seizing a pair of gloves, or silk stockings, or any other property, which it brought to its master. The poor fellow probably saved itself from falling into the hands of an honest man.

Note G, p. 273. USAGES OF CHARITY.

The author has made an attempt in this character to draw a picture of what often seen, a wretched being whose heart becomes hardened and spited at the world which she is doomed to experience much misery and little sympathy. The system of compulsory charity by poor's-rates, of which the absolute necessity can hardly be questioned, has connected with it on both sides some of the most odious and malicious feelings that can agitate humanity. The quality of true charity is not strained, that of mercy, of which, in a large sense, it may be accounted a sister virtue, it is him that gives and him that takes. It awakens kindly feelings both in the mind of the donor and in that of the relieved object. The giver and receiver are recommended to each other by mutual feelings of good-will, and the pleasurable emotions connected with the consciousness of a good action fix the deed and recollection of the one, and a sense of gratitude renders it holy to the other. In the legal and compulsory assessment for the proclaimed parish pauper there is nothing of all this. The alms are extorted from an unwilling hand, and a heart which desires the annihilation, rather than the relief, of the distressed object. The object of charity, sensible of the insult with which the pittance is bestowed, seizes on it as his right, not as a favour, and in the manner of conferring it being directly calculated to hurt and disgust his feelings, he revenges himself by becoming impudent and clamorous. A more odious picture is more likely to deprave the feelings of those exposed to its influence, can hardly be imagined; and yet to such a point have we been brought by an artificial system of socialism that we must either deny altogether the right of the poor to their just proportion of the fruits of the earth, or afford them some means of subsistence out of them by the sanction of positive law.

Note H, p. 325. MEG DODS.

Non omnis moriar. St Ronan's, since this veracious history was given to the public, has revived as a sort of *alias*, or second title, to the very pleasant village of Inverlorn upon Tweed, where there is a medicinal spring much frequented by visitors. For some of the manly and athletic sports, common in the pastoral district around, have competed for under the title of the St Ronan's Games. Nay, Meg Dods has promoted herself of late from obscurity as authoress of a work on Cookery, of which, in addition to a lady who makes so distinguished a figure as this excellent dame, we insert the following page:—

“The Cook and Housewife's Manual: A Practical System of Modern Domestic Cookery and Family Management.

———— ‘Cook, see all your sauces
Be sharp and poynant in the palate, that they may
Commend you: look to your roast and baked meats handsomely,
And what new kickshaws and delicate made things.’

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

By Mistress Margaret Dods, of the Cleikum Inn, St Ronan's.”

Though it is rather unconnected with our immediate subject, we cannot help adding that Mrs Dods has preserved the recipes of certain excellent old dishes which we should be loath should fall into oblivion in our day; and in bearing this testimony, we add that we are no way biassed by the receipt of two bottles of excellent sauce for cold meats which were sent to us by the said Mrs Dods, as a mark of her respect and regard, which we return her our unfeigned thanks, having found them capital.

END OF THE NOTES TO ST RONAN'S WELL.

REDGAUNTLET:

A Tale of the 18th Century.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

Master, go on ; and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty.
As You Like It.

EDINBURGH:
DAM AND CHARLES BLACK, NORTH BRIDGE.

MDCCCLX.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

THE

QUEEN

OF GREAT BRITAIN

INTRODUCTION TO REDGAUNTLET.

THE Jacobite enthusiasm of the eighteenth century, particularly during the rebellion of 1745, afforded a theme, perhaps the finest that could be selected for fictitious composition, founded upon real or probable incident. A civil war, and its remarkable events, were remembered by the existing generation without any degree of the bitterness of spirit which seldom attends internal dissension. The Highlanders, who formed the principal strength of Charles Edward's army, were an ancient and highly-esteemed race, peculiar in their habits of war and of peace, brave to romance, exhibiting a character turning upon points more adapted to poetry than the prose of real life. Their Prince, young, valiant, patient of fatigue, despising danger, heading his army on foot in the most toilsome marches, and defeating a regular force in three battles—all these were circumstances fascinating to the imagination, and might well be supposed to seduce young and enthusiastic minds to the cause in which they were united, although wisdom and reason frowned upon the enterprise. The adventurous Prince, as is well known, proved to be one of those heroes who distinguish themselves during some single and extraordinarily brilliant period of their lives, like the course of a shooting-star, at which men wonder, as well on account of the briefness as the brilliancy of its splendour. A long trace of darkness overshadowed the subsequent life of a man, who, in his youth, showed himself so capable of great undertakings; and, without the painful task of tracing his course farther, we may say the latter pursuits and habits of this unhappy Prince are those fully evincing a broken heart, which seeks refuge from its own thoughts in wild and did enjoyments.

But, however, it was long ere Charles Edward appeared to be—perhaps it was long ere he altogether became—so much degraded from his original self, as to have enjoyed for a time the lustre attending the progress and termination of an enterprise. Those who thought they discerned in his subsequent conduct an insensibility to the distresses of his followers, coupled with a neglect of divine right in which they were brought up, were now generally regarded as dissatisfied and splenetic persons, who, displeased with the result of their adventure, and finding themselves involved in the ruins of the cause, indulged themselves in undeserved reproaches against their leader. Indeed, such censures were by no means frequent among his followers, who, if what was alleged had been just, had the right to complain. Far the greater number of those unfortunate

gentlemen suffered with the most dignified patience, and were either proud to take notice of ill treatment on the part of their Prince, or prudent as to be aware their complaints would meet with little sympathy from the world. It may be added, that the greater part of the banished Jacobites, and those of high rank and consequence, were not much within reach of the influence of the Prince's character and conduct, whether regulated or otherwise.

In the mean time that great Jacobite conspiracy, of which the insurrection of 1745-6 was but a small part, precipitated into action on the failure of a far more general scheme, was resumed and again put into motion. The Jacobites of England, whose force had never been broken, as they prudently avoided bringing it into the field. The surprising effect which had been produced by small means in 1745-6 animated their hopes of more important successes, when the whole non-juring interest of Britain identified as it then was with great part of the landed gentlemen, should come forward to finish what had been gallantly attempted by a few Highland chiefs.

It is probable, indeed, that the Jacobites of the day were incapable of considering that the very small scale on which the effort was made was one great measure the cause of its unexpected success. The remarkable speed with which the insurgents marched, the singularly good discipline which they preserved, the union and unanimity which for some time animated their councils, were all, in a considerable degree, produced by the smallness of their numbers. Notwithstanding the discomfiture of Charles Edward, the nonjurors of the period long continued to nurse unlauded schemes, and to drink treasonable toasts, until age stole upon them. Another generation arose, who did not share the sentiments which Charles cherished; and at length the sparkles of disaffection, which had smouldered, but had never been heated enough to burst into actual flame, became entirely extinguished. But in proportion as the political enthusiasm died gradually away among men of ordinary temperament, it increased those of warm imaginations and weak understandings, and in wild schemes were formed, as desperate as they were adventurous.

Thus a young Scottishman of rank is said to have stooped so low as to plot the surprisal of St James's palace, and the assassination of the royal family. While these ill-digested and desperate conspiracies were agitated among the few Jacobites who still adhered with more obstinacy to their purpose, there is no question but that other plots might have been brought to an open explosion, had it not suited the policy of Sir Robert Walpole rather to prevent or disable the conspirators in their projects than to mulgate the tale of danger, which might thus have been believed more widely diffused than was really the case.

In one instance alone this very prudential and humane line of conduct was departed from, and the event seemed to confirm the policy of the general course. Doctor Archibald Cameron, brother of the celebrated Donald Cameron of Lochiel, attainted for the rebellion of 1745, was taken by a party of soldiers lurking with a comrade in the wilds of Loch Katrine five or six years after the battle of Culloden, and was there seized. The circumstances in his case, so far as was made known to the public, which attracted much compassion, and gave to the judicial proceedings against him an appearance of cold-blooded revenge on the part of the government; and the following argument of a zealous Jacobite in his favour was received as conclusive by Dr Johnson, and other persons who might pretend to impartiality. Dr Cameron had never borne arms, although engaged in the Rebellion, but used his medical skill for the service, indifferently, of the wounded of both parties. His return to

was ascribed exclusively to family affairs. His behaviour at the bar was decent, firm, and respectful. His wife threw herself, on three different occasions, before George II. and the members of his family, was rudely repulsed from their presence, and at length placed, it was said, in the same prison with her husband, and confined with unmanly severity. Dr Cameron was finally executed with all the severities of the law of treason; and his death remains, in popular estimation, a dark blot upon the memory of George II., being almost publicly imputed to a mean and personal hatred of Donald Cameron of Lochiel, the sufferer's heroic brother. Yet the fact was, that whether the execution of Archibald Cameron was political or otherwise, it might certainly have been justified, had the King's ministers so pleased, upon reasons of a public nature. The unfortunate sufferer had not come to the Highlands solely upon his private affairs, as was the general belief; but it was not judged prudent by the English ministry to let it be generally known that he came to inquire about a considerable sum of money which had been remitted from France to the friends of the exiled family. He had also a commission to hold intercourse with the well-known M^r Pherson of Cluny, chief of the clan Vourich, whom the valiant had left behind at his departure from Scotland in 1746, and who remained during ten years of proscription and danger, skulking from place to place in the Highlands, and maintaining an uninterrupted correspondence between Charles and his friends. That Dr Cameron should have held a commission to assist this chief in raking together the dispersed embers of affection is in itself sufficiently natural, and, considering his political principles, in no respect dishonourable to his memory. But neither ought it to be imputed to George II. that he suffered the laws to be enforced against a person taken in the act of breaking them. When he lost his dangerous game, Dr Cameron only paid the forfeit which he must have incurred upon. The ministers, however, thought it proper to leave Dr Cameron's new schemes in concealment, lest, by divulging them, they had created the channel of communication which, it is now well known, they pressed to all the plots of Charles Edward. But it was equally ill advised and ungenerous to sacrifice the character of the king to the policy of the administration. Both points might have been gained by sparing the life of Dr Cameron after conviction, and limiting his punishment to perpetual exile. These repeated and successive Jacobite plots rose and burst like bubbles from a fountain; and one of them, at least, the Chevalier judged of importance enough to induce him to risk himself within the dangerous precincts of the British capital. This appears from Dr King's *Anecdotes of his Own* days.

September 1750.—I received a note from my Lady Primrose, who desired to see me immediately. As soon as I waited on her, she led me into her sitting-room, and presented me to ——— [the Chevalier, doubtless]. "If I was surprised to find him there, I was still more astonished when he acquainted me with the motives which had induced him to hazard a journey to England at this juncture. The impatience of his friends who were in Scotland had formed a scheme which was impracticable; but although it had appeared as feasible as they had represented it to him, yet no preparation had been made, nor was anything ready to carry it into execution. He was convinced that he had been deceived; and therefore, after a stay in Scotland of five days only, he returned to the place from whence he came." Dr King was in 1750 a keen Jacobite, as may be inferred from the visit paid by him to the Prince under such circumstances, and from his being one of that unfortunate person's chosen correspondents. He, as well as other persons of sense and observation, began to despair of making their fortune in the way which they had chosen. It was, indeed, sufficiently dangerous; for,

during the short visit just described, one of Dr King's servants remarked the stranger's likeness to Prince Charles, whom he recognised from the common busts.

The occasion taken for breaking up the Stewart interest we shall tell Dr King's own words:—"When he (Charles Edward) was in Scotland, had a mistress whose name was Walkinshaw, and whose sister was at the time, and is still, housekeeper at Leicester House. Some years after he was released from his prison, and conducted out of France, he sent for a girl, who soon acquired such a dominion over him, that she was acquainted with all his schemes, and trusted with his most secret correspondence. As soon as this was known in England, all those persons of distinction who were attached to him were greatly alarmed: they imagined that this woman had been placed in his family by the English ministers; and, considering her sister's situation, they seemed to have some ground for their suspicion. Wherefore, they despatched a gentleman to Paris, where the Prince then was, who had instructions to insist that Mrs Walkinshaw should be removed to a convent for a certain term; but her gallant absolutely refused to comply with this demand; and although Mr M'Namara, the gentleman who was sent to him, who has a natural eloquence, and an excellent understanding, urged the most cogent reasons, and used all the arts of persuasion, to induce him to part with his mistress, and even proceeded as far as to assure him, according to his instructions, that an immediate interruption of all correspondence with his most powerful friends in England, and, in short, that the ruin of his interest, which was now daily increasing, would be the infallible consequence of his refusal; yet he continued inflexible, and all M'Namara's entreaties and remonstrances were ineffectual. M'Namara staid in Paris some days beyond the time prescribed him, endeavouring to reason the Prince into a better temper; but finding he obstinately persevered in his first answer, he took his leave with conciliation and indignation, saying, as he passed out, 'What has your family done, sir, thus to draw down the vengeance of Heaven on every branch of the house through so many ages?' It is worthy of remark, that in all the conferences which M'Namara had with the Prince on this occasion, the latter declared that it was not a violent passion, or indeed any particular regard which attached him to Mrs Walkinshaw, and that he could see her removed from him without any concern; but he would not receive dissuasions, in respect to his private conduct, from any man alive. When M'Namara returned to London, and reported the Prince's answer to the gentlemen who had employed him, they were astonished and confounded. However, they soon resolved on the measures which they were to pursue for the future, and determined no longer to serve a man who could not be persuaded to serve himself, and chose rather to endanger the lives of the best and most faithful friends, than part with an harlot, whom, as he declared, he neither loved nor esteemed."

From this anecdote, the general truth of which is indubitable, the principal fault of Charles Edward's temper is sufficiently obvious. It was his high sense of his own importance, and an obstinate adherence to what he had once determined on—qualities which, if he had succeeded in his attempt, gave the nation little room to hope that he would have been found free from the love of prerogative and desire of arbitrary power, which characterised his unhappy grandfather. He gave a notable instance how far this was the leading feature of his character, when, for no reasonable cause that can be assigned, he placed his own single will in opposition to the necessities of France, which, in order to purchase a peace becoming necessary to the kingdom, was reduced to gratify Britain by prohibiting the residence of Charles within any part of the French dominions. It

vain that France endeavoured to lessen the disgrace of this step by making the most flattering offers, in hopes to induce the Prince of himself to anticipate this disagreeable alternative, which, if seriously enforced, it was likely to be, he had no means whatever of resisting, by leaving the kingdom as of his own freewill. Inspired, however, by the spirit of hereditary obstinacy, Charles preferred a useless resistance to a dignified submission, and, by a series of idle bravadoes, laid the French Court under the necessity of arresting their late ally, and sending him to close confinement in the Bastile, from which he was afterwards sent out of the French dominions, much in the manner in which a convict is transported to the place of his destination.

In addition to these repeated instances of a rash and inflexible temper, Dr King also adds faults alleged to belong to the Prince's character, of a less consonant with his noble birth and high pretensions. He is said by this author to have been avaricious, or parsimonious at least, to such a degree of meanness, as to fail, even when he had ample means, in relieving the sufferers who had lost their fortune, and sacrificed all in his ill-considered attempt.¹ We must receive, however, with some degree of jealousy what is said by Dr King on this subject, recollecting that he had left at liberty, if he did not desert, the standard of the unfortunate Prince, and was therefore a person who was likely to form the fairest estimate of his virtues and faults. We must also remember, that if the exiled Prince gave credit, he had but little to give, especially considering how late he nourished the scheme of another expedition to Scotland, for which he was long endeavouring to hoard money.

The case, also, of Charles Edward must be allowed to have been a difficult one. He had to satisfy numerous persons, who, having lost their all in his cause, had, with that all, seen the extinction of hopes which they counted nearly as good as certainties; some of these were perhaps importunate in their applications, and certainly ill-pleased with their want of success. Other parts of the Chevalier's conduct may have afforded grounds for charging him with coldness to the sufferings of his devoted followers. Of these was a sentiment which has nothing in it that is generous, but which was certainly a principle in which the young Prince was trained, and which may be too probably denominated peculiar to his family, educated in the high notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. If the unhappy Prince gave implicit faith to the professions of statesmen holding such notions, which is implied by his whole conduct, it must have led to a natural though ungracious inference, that the services of a subject were not, to whatever degree of ruin they might bring the individual, a debt against his sovereign. Such a person could only boast that he had done his duty; nor was he entitled to be a claimant for a greater reward than it was convenient for the Prince to bestow, or to hold his sovereign his debtor for losses which he had sustained through his loyalty. To a certain extent the Jacobite principles inevitably led to this cold and

reproach is thus expressed by Dr King, who brings the charge:—"But the odious part of his character is his love of money, a vice which I do not remember to have been imputed by our historians to any of his ancestors, and is the certain proof of a base and little mind. I know it may be urged in his vindication, that a man in exile ought to be an economist. And so he ought; but, nevertheless, his purse should be always open, as long as there is anything in it, to relieve the necessities of his friends and adherents. King Charles II., during his banishment, would have the last pistole in his pocket with his little family. But I have known this man, with two thousand louis-d'ors in his strong-box, pretend he was in great want, and borrow money from a lady in Paris who was not in affluent circumstances. I have seen his faithful servants, who had closely attended him in all his difficulties, were ordered."—KING'S *Memoirs*.

egotistical mode of reasoning on the part of the sovereign; nor, with our natural pity for the situation of royalty in distress, do we feel entitled to affirm that Charles did not use this opiate to his feelings, on viewing the misery of his followers, while he certainly possessed, though in no great degree, the means of affording them more relief than he practised.

His own history, after leaving France, is brief and melancholy. For time he seems to have held the firm belief that Providence, which had borne him through so many hazards, still reserved him for some distant occasion, in which he should be empowered to vindicate the honours of his birth. But opportunity after opportunity slipped by unimproved, and the death of his father gave him the fatal proof that none of the principal powers of Europe were, after that event, likely to interest themselves in his quarrel. They refused to acknowledge him under the title of the King of England, and, on his part, he declined to be then recognised as the Prince of Wales.

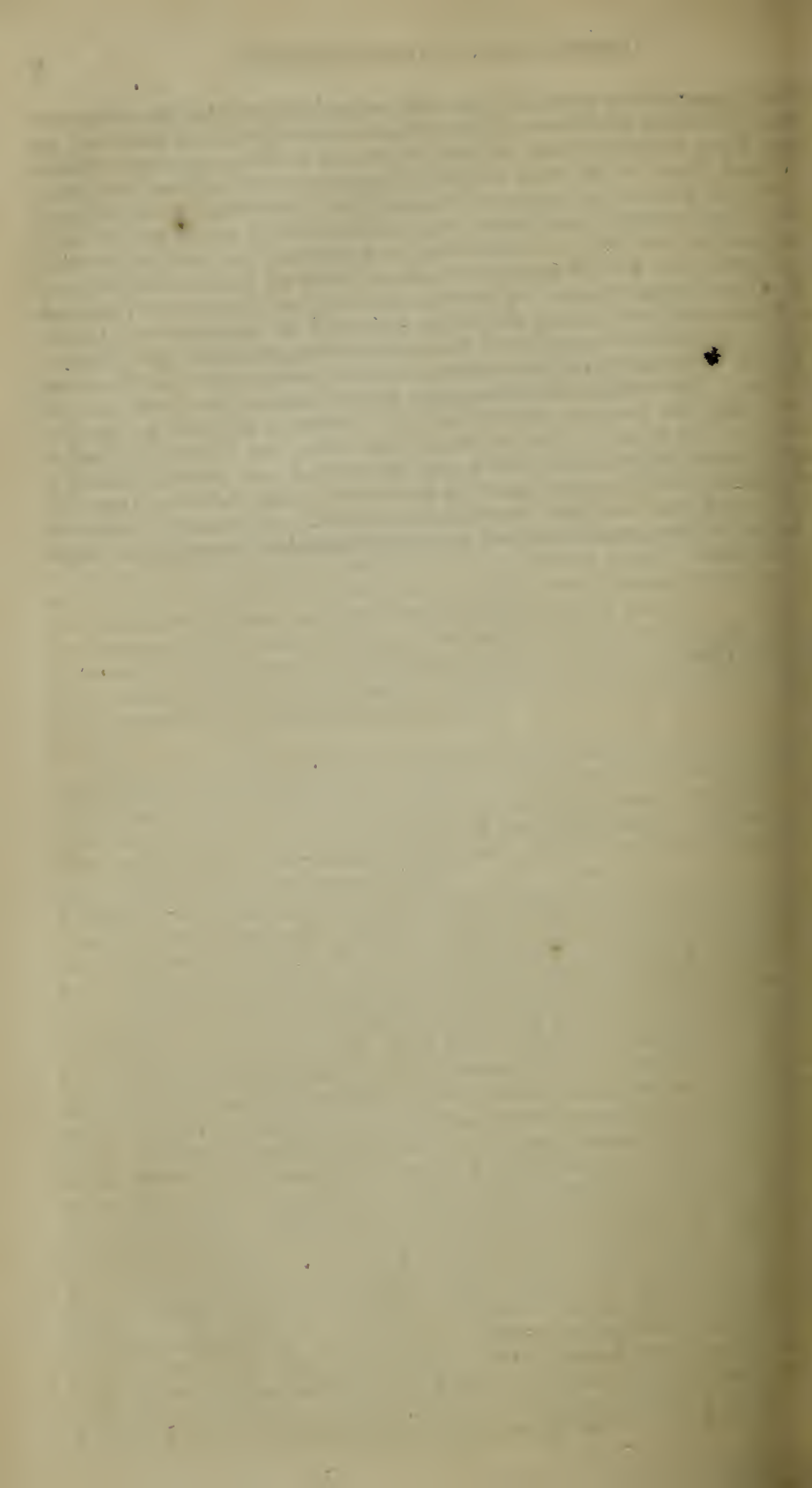
Family discord came to add its sting to those of disappointed ambition, and, though a humiliating circumstance, it is generally acknowledged that Charles Edward, the adventurous, the gallant, and the handsome, the leader of a race of pristine valour, whose romantic qualities may be said to have died along with him, had, in his latter days, yielded to the humiliating habits of intoxication, in which the meanest mortals seek to drown the recollection of their disappointments and miseries. Under such circumstances the unhappy Prince lost the friendship even of those faithful followers who had most devoted themselves to his misfortunes, and was surrounded, with some honourable exceptions, by men of a lower description, regardless of the character which he was himself no longer able to protect.

It is a fact consistent with the author's knowledge, that persons totally unentitled to, and unfitted for, such a distinction, were presented to the unfortunate Prince in moments unfit for presentation of any kind. As these clouds were at length extinguished the torch which once shone over Britain with such terrific glare, and at last sunk in its own ash, scarce remembered and scarce noted.

Meantime, while the life of Charles Edward was gradually wasting in disappointed solitude, the number of those who had shared his misfortunes and dangers had shrunk into a small handful of veterans, the heroes of the tale which had been told. Most Scottish readers, who can count the number of sixty years, must recollect many respected acquaintances of their youth, who, as the established phrase gently worded it, had been *out in Forty-five*. It may be said, that their political principles and plans no longer either gained proselytes or attracted terror; those who held them had ceased to be the subjects either of fear or opposition. Jacobites looked upon in society as men who had proved their sincerity by sacrificing their interest to their principles; and in well-regulated companies it held a piece of ill-breeding to injure their feelings or ridicule the com-mises by which they endeavoured to keep themselves abreast of the current of the day. Such, for example, was the evasion of a gentleman of fortune in Perthshire, who, in having the newspapers read to him, called the King and Queen to be designated by the initial letters of K. and Q. as if, by naming the full word, he might imply an acquiescence in the usurpation of the family of Hanover. George III., having heard of this gentleman's custom in the above and other particulars, commissioned a member for Perthshire to carry his compliments to the steady Jacobite, "that is," said the excellent old King, "not the compliments of the King of England, but those of the Elector of Hanover, and tell him how I respect him for the steadiness of his principles."

Those who remember such old men will probably agree that the progress of time, which has withdrawn all of them from the field, has removed, at the same time, a peculiar and striking feature of ancient manners. Their tales of past times, their tales of bloody battles fought against romantic foes, were all dear to the imagination, and their idolatry of locks of hair, of pearls, rings, ribbons, and other memorials of the time in which they lived seemed to live, was an interesting enthusiasm; and although their political principles, had they existed in the relation of fathers, might have rendered them dangerous to the existing dynasty, yet, as we now recollect them, there could not be on the earth supposed to exist persons better qualified to sustain the capacity of innocuous and respectable grandsires. It was while reflecting on these things that the novel of Redgauntlet was undertaken. But various circumstances in the composition induced the author to alter its purport considerably, as it passed through his hands, to carry the action to that point of time when the Chevalier Charles Stuart, though fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, was yet meditating a desperate attempt, which could scarcely have been more hopeless than his; although one to which, as we have seen, the unfortunate Prince, at that late as seventeen hundred and fifty-three, still looked with hope and expectation.

1st April 1632.



RED GAUNTLET

LETTER I.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Dumfries.

Sur me exanimas querelis tuis?—In plain English, Why do you vex me with your croaking? The disconsolate tone in which you bid me farewell at Noble-House,¹ and mounted your miserable hack to return to your law drudgery, still sounds in my ears. It seemed to say, "Happy dog! you can ramble at pleasure over hill and dale, pursue every object of curiosity that presents itself, and relinquish the chase when it loses interest; while I, your senior and far better, must, in this brilliant season, return to my narrow chamber and my musty books."

Such was the import of the reflections with which you saddened my parting bottle of claret, and thus I must needs interpret the signs of your melancholy adieu.

And why should this be so, Alan? Why the deuce should you not be sitting precisely opposite to me at this moment, in the same comfortable George Inn; thy heels on the fender, and thy juridical cap expanding its plications as a pun rose in your fancy? Above all, why, when I fill this very glass of wine, cannot I push the bottle to you, and say, "Fairford, you are chased!" Why, I say, should all this be, except because Alan Fairford has not the same true sense of friendship as Darsie Latimer, and will not regard our purses as common, as well as our sentiments?

I am alone in the world; my only guardian writes to me of a large fortune which will be mine when I reach the age of twenty-five coming; my present income is, thou knowest, more than sufficient for my wants; and yet thou—traitor as thou art to the cause of friendship—dost deprive me of the pleasure of thy society, and submittest, yes, to self-denial on thine own part, rather than my wanderings should cost me a few guineas more! Is this regard for my purse, or mine own pride? Is it not equally absurd and unreasonable, never source it springs from? For myself, I tell thee, I have, I shall have, more than enough for both. This same methodical

¹ The first stage on the road from Edinburgh to Dumfries *vid* Moffat.

Samuel Griffiths, of Ironmonger Lane, Guildhall, London, whose letter arrives as duly as quarterday, has sent me, as I told thee, doubtless allowance for this my twenty-first birthday, and an assurance, in his brief fashion, that it will be again doubled for the succeeding years, until I enter into possession of my own property. Still I am to refrain from visiting England until my twenty-fifth year expires, and it is recommended that I shall forbear all inquiries concerning my family, and so forth, for the present.

Were it not that I recollect my poor mother in her deep widow weeds, with a countenance that never smiled but when she looked on me—and then, in such wan and woeful sort, as the sun when it glances through an April cloud,—were it not, I say, that her maternal and matron-like form and countenance forbid such a suspicion, might I think myself the son of some Indian director, or rich citizen who had more wealth than grace, and a handful of hypocrisy to boot, and who was breeding up privately, and obscurely enriching, one whose existence he had some reason to be ashamed of? But, as I said before, I think on my mother, and am convinced as much as of the existence of my own soul, that no touch of shame could arise from anything in which she was implicated. Meantime, I am wealthy, and I am alone, and why does my friend scruple to share my wealth?

Are you not my only friend? and have you not acquired a right to share my wealth? Answer me that, Alan Fairford. When I was brought from the solitude of my mother's dwelling into the tumult of the Gaits' Class at the High School—when I was mocked for my English accent—salted with snow as a Southern—rolled in the gutter for a Saxon pock-pudding,—who with stout arguments, and stout blows, stood forth my defender?—why, Alan Fairford. Who comforted me soundly when I brought the arrogance of an only son, and the course of a spoiled urchin, to the forms of the little republic?—why, Alan. And who taught me to smoke a cobbler, pin a lozen, hear a bicker, and hold the bannets?¹—Alan, once more. If I became the pride of the Yards, and the dread of the hucksters in the High School Wynd, it was under thy patronage; and, but for thee, I should have been contented with humbly passing through the Cowgate-Fair without climbing over the top of it, and had never seen the *Kittle nine-steps*² nearer than from Bareford's Parks. You taught me to keep my fingers off the weak, and to clench my fist against the strong—to carry no tales out of school—to stand forth like a true man, to obey the stern order of a *Pande manum*, and endure my pawls without wincing, like one that is determined not to be the better of them. In a word, before I knew thee, I knew nothing.

At College it was the same. When I was incorrigibly idle, your example and encouragement roused me to mental exertion, and showed me the way to intellectual enjoyment. You made me an historian, a metaphysician (*invita Minerva*)—nay, by Heaven! you had almost made an advocate of me, as well as of yourself. Yes, rather than part with you, Alan, I attended a weary season at the Scotch

¹ Break a window, head a skirmish with stones, and hold the bonnet, or hat, as a chief, which used to divide high-school boys when fighting.

² See Note A. *The Kittle nine-steps*.

class; a wearier at the Civil; and with what excellent advantage, my note-book, filled with caricatures of the professors and my fellow-students, is it not yet extant to testify?

“Thus far have I held on with thee untired

and, to say truth, purely and solely that I might travel the same road with thee. But it will not do, Alan. By my faith, man, I could as soon think of being one of those ingenious traders who cheat little Master Jackies on the outside of the partition with tops, balls, bats, and battledores, as a member of the long-robed fraternity within, who repose on grown country gentlemen with bouncing brocards of law.¹ Now, don't you read this to your worthy father, Alan—he loves me well enough, I know, of a Saturday night; but he thinks me but idle company for any other day of the week. And here, I suspect, lies our real objection to taking a ramble with me through the southern counties in this delicious weather. I know the good gentleman has hard thoughts of me for being so unsettled as to leave Edinburgh before the Session rises; perhaps, too, he quarrels a little—I will not say, with my want of ancestry, but with my want of connections. He reckons me a lone thing in this world, Alan, and so, in good truth, am; and it seems a reason to him why you should not attach yourself to me, that I can claim no interest in the general herd. Do not suppose I forget what I owe him, for permitting me to alter for four years under his roof: My obligations to him are not less, but the greater, if he never heartily loved me. He is angry, that I will not, or cannot, be a lawyer, and, with reference to you, considers my disinclination that way as *pessimi exempli*, as he might

but he need not be afraid that a lad of your steadiness will be influenced by such a reed shaken by the winds as I am. You will go doubting with Dirleton, and resolving those doubts with Stewart,² and the cramp speech³ has been spoken *more solito* from the corner of the bench, and with covered head—until you have sworn to defend the liberties and privileges of the College of Justice—until the black robe is hung on your shoulders, and you are free as any of the others to sue or defend. Then will I step forth, Alan, and in a matter, which even your father will allow, may be more useful to you than had I shared this splendid termination of your legal studies. Now, word, if I cannot be a counsel, I am determined to be a *client*, of person without whom a lawsuit would be as dull as a suppellex case. Yes, I am determined to give you your first fee. One day, easily, I am assured, get into a lawsuit—it is only the getting out that is sometimes found troublesome;—and, with your kind father as agent, and you for my counsel learned in the law, and the worthy Master Samuel Griffiths to back me, a few sessions shall not

¹ Note B. *Parliament House.*

² Sir John Nisbett of Dirleton's Doubts and Questions upon the Law, especially of the 1st; and, “Sir James Stewart's Dirleton's Doubts and Questions on the Law of the 2nd resolved and answered,” are works of authority in Scottish jurisprudence. As usually the case, the Doubts are held more in respect than the solution.

³ Note C. *The Cramp speech.*

tire my patience. In short, I will make my way into Court, even if it should cost me the committing a *delict*, or at least a *quasi delict*.—You see all is not lost of what Erskine wrote, and Wallace taught.

Thus far I have fooled it off well enough; and yet, Alan, all is not at ease within me. I am affected with a sense of loneliness, the most depressing, that it seems to me to be a solitude peculiarly my own. In a country where all the world have a circle of consanguinity, extending to sixth cousins at least, I am a solitary individual, having only one kind heart to throb in unison with my own. If I were condemned to labour for my bread, methinks I should less regard the peculiar species of deprivation. The necessary communication between master and servant would be at least a tie which would attach me to the rest of my kind—as it is, my very independence seems to enhance the peculiarity of my situation. I am in the world as a stranger in the crowded coffeehouse, where he enters, calls for what refreshment he wants, pays his bill, and is forgotten so soon as the waiter's mouth has pronounced his "Thank ye, sir."

I know your good father would term this *sinning my mercies*, and ask how I should feel if, instead of being able to throw down my reckoning, I were obliged to deprecate the resentment of the landlord for consuming that which I could not pay for. I cannot tell how it is; but, though this very reasonable reflection comes across me, and though I do confess that four hundred a-year in possession, eight hundred in near prospect, and the Lord knows how many hundreds more in the distance, are very pretty and comfortable things, yet I would freely give one-half of them to call your father *father*, though he should scold me for my idleness every hour of the day, and to call you *brother*, though a brother whose merits would throw my own completely into the shade.

The faint, yet not improbable belief has often come across me, that your father knows something more about my birth and condition than he is willing to communicate; it is so unlikely that I should be in Edinburgh at six years old, without any other recommendation than the regular payment of my board to old M——² of the High School. Before that time, as I have often told you, I have but a recollection of unbounded indulgence on my mother's part, and of the most tyrannical exertion of caprice on my own. I remember how bitterly she sighed, how vainly she strove to soothe me, when, in the full energy of despotism, I roared like ten bull-calves, for something which it was impossible to procure for me. She is dead, kind, that ill-rewarded mother! I remember the long face-darkened room—the black hangings—the mysterious impressions made upon my mind by the hearse and mourning coaches, and the difficulty which I had to reconcile all this to the disappearance of my mother. I do not think I had before this event formed any idea of death, or that I had even heard of that final consummation of all our lives. The first acquaintance which I formed with it deprived me of my only relation.

1 A peculiar Scottish phrase, expressive of ingratitude for the favours of Providence.

2 Probably Mathieson, the predecessor of Dr Adams, to whose memory the author and his contemporaries owe a deep debt of gratitude.

A clergyman of venerable appearance, our only visitor, was my aide and companion in a journey of considerable length; and in the charge of another elderly man, substituted in his place, I know not how or why, I completed my journey to Scotland—and this is all I collect.

I repeat the little history now, as I have a hundred times before, merely because I would wring some sense out of it. Turn, then, thy ear, wire-drawing, lawyer-like ingenuity to the same task—make my history as though thou wert shaping the blundering allegations of some blue-bonneted, hard-headed client, into a condescendence of facts and circumstances, and thou shalt be, not my Apollo—*quid tibi lyra?*—but my Lord Stair.¹ Meanwhile, I have written myself of my melancholy and blue devils, merely by prosing about them; I will now converse half an hour with Roan Robin in his stall—the rascal knows me already, and snickers whenever I cross the threshold of the stable.

The black which you bestrode yesterday morning promises to be a admirable roadster, and ambled as easily with Sam and the portmanteau as with you and your load of law-learning. Sam promises to be steady, and has hitherto been so. No long trial, you will say. I lay the blame of former inaccuracies on evil company—the fellows who were at the livery-stable were too seductive, I suppose—denies he ever did the horse injustice—would rather have wanted a new dinner, he says. In this I believe him, as Roan Robin's ribs and coat show no marks of contradiction. However, as he will meet no saints in the inns we frequent, and as oats are sometimes as easily converted into ale as John Barleycorn himself, I shall keep him out after Master Sam. Stupid fellow! had he not abused my nature, I might have chatted to him to keep my tongue in use; whereas now I must keep him at a distance.

Do you remember what Mr Fairford said to me on this subject—do not become my father's son to speak in that manner to Sam's son? I asked you what your father could possibly know of me, and you answered, "As much, you supposed, as he knew of me—it was a proverbial expression." This did not quite satisfy me, though I am sure I cannot tell why it should not. But I am going to a fruitless and exhausted subject. Do not be afraid I shall come back on this well-trodden yet pathless field of conversation. I know nothing so useless, so utterly feeble and contemptible as the groaning forth one's helpless lamentations into the ears of friends.

I could fain promise you that my letters shall be as entertaining as I determined they shall be regular and well filled. We have no advantage over the dear friends of old, every pair of them. I have David and Jonathan, nor Orestes and Pylades, nor Damon and Phinias—although, in the latter case particularly, a letter by either would have been very acceptable—ever corresponded together; I probably could not write, and certainly had neither post nor time to speed their effusions to each other; whereas yours, which

¹ Celebrated as a Scottish lawyer.

you had from the old peer, being handled gently, and opened with precaution, may be returned to me again, and serve to make us f of his Majesty's post-office during the whole time of my proper tour.¹ Mercy upon us, Alan! what letters I shall have to send y with an account of all that I can collect, of pleasant or rare, in wild-goose jaunt of mine! All I stipulate is, that you do not communicate them to the Scots Magazine; for though you used, in left-handed way, to compliment me on my attainments in the lighter branches of literature, at the expense of my deficiency in weightier matters of the law, I am not yet audacious enough to enter the portal which the learned Ruddiman so kindly opened for acolytes of the Muses.—*Vale, sis memor mei.*

D.]

P. S.—Direct to the Post-Office here. I shall leave order forward your letters wherever I may travel.

LETTER II.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

NEGATUR, my dear Darsie—you have logic and law enough to understand the word of denial. I deny your conclusion. The premises I admit, namely, that when I mounted on that infernal horse I might utter what seemed a sigh, although I deemed it lost in the puffs and groans of the broken-winded brute, matchless in the complication of her complaints by any save she, the poor man's horse renowned in song, that died

"A mile aboon Dundee."²

But credit me, Darsie, the sigh which escaped me concerned more than myself, and regarded neither the superior mettle of my cavalry, nor your greater command of the means of travelling; I could certainly have cheerfully ridden on with you for a few days, and assure yourself I would not have hesitated to tax your bountiful purse for our joint expenses. But you know my father considers every moment taken from the law as a step down-hill; I owe much to his anxiety on my account, although its effects are sometimes troublesome. For example:

I found, on my arrival at the shop in Brown's Square, that the old gentleman had returned that very evening, impatient, it is said, of remaining a night out of the guardianship of the domestic

See Note D. *Letter Franks.*

² Alluding, as all Scotsmen know, to the humorous old song:—

"The auld man's mare's dead,
The puir man's mare's dead,
The auld man's mare's dead,
A mile aboon Dundee."

Having this information from James, whose brow wore rather an anxious look on the occasion, I despatched a Highland chairman to the livery stable with my Bucephalus, and slunk, with as little noise as might be, into my own den, where I began to mumble certain half-chewed and not half-digested doctrines of our municipal code. I was not long seated when my father's visage was thrust, in a peering sort of way, through the half-opened door; and withdrawn, on seeing my occupation, with a half-articulated *humph!* which seemed to convey doubt of the seriousness of my application. If it were so, I cannot condemn him; for recollection of thee occupied me so entirely during an hour's reading, that, although Stair lay before me, and notwithstanding that I turned over three or four pages, the sense of his lordship's clear and perspicuous style so far escaped me, that I had the mortification to find my labour was utterly in vain.

Ere I had brought up my lee-way, James appeared with his summons to our frugal supper—radishes, cheese, and a bottle of the old—only two plates, though—and no chair set for Mr Darsie, by the inventive James Wilkinson. Said James, with his long face, lank air, and very long pigtail in its leathern strap, was placed, as usual, the back of my father's chair, upright as a wooden sentinel at the door of a puppet-show. "You may go down, James," said my father; I exit Wilkinson.—What is to come next? thought I; for the father is not clear on the paternal brow.

My boots encountered his first glance of displeasure, and he asked, with a sneer, which way I had been riding. He expected me to answer, "Nowhere," and would then have been at me with his usual asasm, touching the humour of walking in shoes at twenty shillings a pair. But I answered with composure, that I had ridden out to Nether as far as Noble-House. He started (you know his way), as I had said that I had dined at Jericho; and as I did not choose to stoop to observe his surprise, but continued munching my radishes in tranquillity, he broke forth in ire.

To Noble-House, sir! and what had you to do at Noble-House, —Do you remember you are studying law, sir?—that your Scots trials are coming on, sir?—that every moment of your time just is worth hours at another time—and have you leisure to go to Noble-House, sir?—and to throw your books behind you for so many days?—Had it been a turn in the Meadows, or even a game at golf at Noble-House, sir!"

I went so far with Darsie Latimer, sir, to see him begin his day."

"Darsie Latimer?" he replied, in a softened tone—"Humph!—I do not blame you for being kind to Darsie Latimer; but it is not to have done as much good if you had walked with him as far as the bar, and then made your farewells—it would have saved your hire—and your reckoning, too, at dinner."

"Latimer paid that, sir," I replied, thinking to soften the matter; "I had much better have left it unspoken."

"The reckoning, sir!" replied my father. "And did you sponge on any man for a reckoning? Sir, no man should enter the door of a public-house without paying his lawing."

"I admit the general rule, sir," I replied; "but this was a parting cup between Darsie and me; and I should conceive it fell under the exception of *Doch-an-dorroch*."

"You think yourself a wit," said my father, with as near an approach to a smile as ever he permits to gild the solemnity of his features; "but I reckon you did not eat your dinner standing, like the Jews at their Passover? and it was decided in a case before the town-bailies of Coupar-Angus, when Luckie Simpson's cow had drunk up Luckie Jamieson's browst of ale, while it stood in the door to cook that there was no damage to pay, because the crummie drank without sitting down; such being the very circumstance constituting *Doch-an-dorroch*, which is a standing drink, for which no reckoning is paid. Ha, sir! what says your advocateship (*fieri*) to that? *Exceptio firmat regulam*—But come, fill your glass, Alan; I am not sorry ye have shown this attention to Darsie Latimer, who is a good lad, as times go; and having now lived under my roof since he left the school, why, there is really no great matter in coming under the small obligation to him."

As I saw my father's scruples were much softened by the consciousness of his superiority in the legal argument, I took care to accept my pardon as a matter of grace, rather than of justice; and only replied, we should feel ourselves duller of an evening, now that you were absent. I will give you my father's exact words in reply, Darsie. You know him so well, that they will not offend you; and you are also aware, that there mingles with the good man's preciseness and formality a fund of shrewd observation and practical good sense.

"It is very true," he said; "Darsie was a pleasant companion—over-waggish, over-waggish, Alan, and somewhat scatter-brained. By the way, Wilkinson must get our ale bottled in English pints now, for a quart bottle is too much, night after night, for you and me, without his assistance.—But Darsie, as I was saying, is an arch lad, and somewhat light in the upper story—I wish him well through the world; but he has little solidity, Alan, little solidity."

I scorn to desert an absent friend, Darsie, so I said for you a little more than my conscience warranted: but your defection from your legal studies had driven you far to leeward in my father's good opinion.

"Unstable as water, he shall not excel," said my father; "or, the Septuagint hath it, *Effusa est sicut aqua—non crescat*. He goes to dancing-houses, and readeth novels—*sat est*."

I endeavoured to parry these texts by observing, that the dancing-houses amounted only to one night at La Pique's ball—the novels (so far as matter of notoriety, Darsie) to an odd volume of Tom Jones.

"But he danced from night to morning," replied my father, "he read the idle trash, which the author should have been scouring for, at least twenty times over. It was never out of his hand."

I then hinted, that in all probability your fortune was now so good as to dispense with your prosecuting the law any farther than you had done; and therefore you might think you had some title to amuse yourself. This was the least palatable argument of all.

"If he cannot amuse himself with the law," said my father, "he

hly, "it is the worse for him. If he needs not law to teach him to
 ke a fortune, I am sure he needs it to teach him how to keep one;
 l it would better become him to be learning this, than to be scour-
 the country like a land-louper, going he knows not where, to see
 knows not what, and giving treats at Noble-House to fools like
 self" (an angry glance at poor me). "Noble-House, indeed!"
 repeated, with elevated voice and sneering tone, as if there were
 ething offensive to him in the name, though I will venture to say,
 any place in which you had been extravagant enough to spend
 illings, would have stood as deep in his reprobation.
 indful of your idea, that my father knows more of your real situ-
 n than he thinks proper to mention, I thought I would hazard
 hing observation. "I did not see," I said, "how the Scottish law
 ld be useful to a young gentleman whose fortune would seem to
 ested in England."—I really thought my father would have beat

Dye mean to come round me, sir, *per ambages*, as Counsellor
 says? What is it to you where Darsie Latimer's fortune is
 ed, or whether he hath any fortune, ay or no?—And what ill
 d the Scottish law do to him, though he had as much of it as
 r Stair or Bankton, sir? Is not the foundation of our municipal
 he ancient code of the Roman Empire, devised at a time when
 s so much renowned for its civil polity, sir, and wisdom? Go
 ur bed, sir, after your expedition to Noble-House, and see that
 lamp be burning and your book before you ere the sun peeps.
longa, vita brevis,—were it not a sin to call the divine science
 e law by the inferior name of art."

my lamp did burn, dear Darsie, the next morning, though the
 took the risk of a domiciliary visitation, and lay snug in bed,
 ng its glimmer might, without farther inquiry, be received as
 ent evidence of his vigilance. And now, upon this the third
 ng after your departure, things are but little better; for though
 mp burns in my den, and Voet on the Pandects hath his wis-
 pread open before me, yet as I only use him as a reading-desk
 ch to scribble this sheet of nonsense to Darsie Latimer, it is
 le the vicinity will be of little furtherance to my studies.

now, methinks, I hear thee call me an affected hypocritical
 who, living under such a system of distrust and restraint as my
 chooses to govern by, nevertheless pretends not to envy you
 eedom and independence.

ner, I will tell you no lies. I wish my father would allow me
 more exercise of my free will, were it but that I might feel
 sure of doing what would please him of my own accord. A
 ore spare time, and a little more money to enjoy it, would,
 neither misbecome my age nor my condition; and it is, I
 voking to see so many in the same situation winging the air
 om, while I sit here, caged up like a cobbler's linnet, to chant
 e unvaried lesson from sunrise to sunset, not to mention the
 to so many lectures against idleness, as if I enjoyed or was
 use of the means of amusement! But then I cannot at heart
 ther the motive or the object of this severity. For the

motive, it is and can only be my father's anxious, devoted, and unmitting affection and zeal for my improvement, with a laudable sense of the honour of the profession to which he has trained me.

As we have no near relations, the tie betwixt us is of even unust closeness, though in itself one of the strongest which nature can form. I am, and have all along been, the exclusive object of my father's anxious hopes, and his still more anxious and engrossing fears; what title have I to complain, although now and then these fears and hopes lead him to take a troublesome and incessant charge of all my motions? Besides, I ought to recollect, and, Darsie, I do recollect that my father upon various occasions has shown that he can be indulgent as well as strict. The leaving his old apartments in Luckenbooths was to him like divorcing the soul from the body; y Dr R— did but hint that the better air of this new district was more favourable to my health, as I was then suffering under penalties of too rapid a growth, when he exchanged his old and loved quarters, adjacent to the very Heart of Mid-Lothian, for one of those new tenements [entire within themselves] which modern taste has so lately introduced. Instance also the inestimable favour which he conferred on me by receiving you into his house, when I had only the unpleasant alternative of remaining, though a grown lad, in the society of mere boys.¹ This was a thing so contrary to all my father's ideas of seclusion, of economy, and of the safety of my morals and industry, which he wished to attain, by preserving me from the society of other young people, that, upon my word, I am always rather astonished how I should have had the impudence to make the request, than that he should have complied with it.

Then for the object of his solicitude—Do not laugh, or hold your hands, my good Darsie; but upon my word I like the profession to which I am in the course of being educated, and am serious in prosecuting the preliminary studies. The law is my vocation—especial, and, I may say, in an hereditary way, my vocation; for though I have not the honour to belong to any of the great families who form in Scotland, as in France, the noblesse of the robe with us, at least, carry their heads as high, or rather higher, than the noblesse of the sword,—for the former consist more frequently of “first born of Egypt,”—yet my grandfather, who, I daresay, the most excellent person, had the honour to sign a bitter protest against the Union, in the respectable character of town-clerk to the Corporation of Birlthegroat; and there is some reason—shall I hope, or to suspect?—that he may have been a natural son of a cousin of the then Fairford of that ilk, who had been long running up the ladder of legal promotion, being, as you know as well as I, an eminent and respected Writer to his Majesty's Signet; and I am destined to mount a round higher still, and wear the honourable robe which is sometimes supposed, like Charity, to cover a multitude of sins. I have, therefore, no choice but to climb upwards, since I have mounted thus high, or else to fall down at the imminent

¹ See Note E. *Brown Square.*

ny neck. So that I reconcile myself to my destiny; and while you are looking from mountain peaks, at distant lakes and friths, I am *de picibus juris*, consoling myself with visions of crimson and scarlet gowns—with the appendages of handsome cowls, well lined with salary. You smile, Darsie, *more tuo*, and seem to say it is little worth while to cozen one's self with such vulgar dreams; yours being, on the contrary, of a high and heroic character, bearing the same resemblance to mine that a bench, covered with purple cloth, and plentifully loaded with session papers, does to some Gothic throne, rough with Barbaric pearl and gold. But what would you have?—*Sua quemque trahit voluptas*. And my visions of preferment, though they may be as unsubstantial at present, are nevertheless more capable of being realised, than your aspirations after the Lord knows what. What is my father's proverb? "Look to a gown of gold, and you will at last get a sleeve of it." Such is my pursuit; but what dost thou ask to? The chance that the mystery, as you call it, which at present enshrouds your birth and connections, will clear up into something expressibly and inconceivably brilliant; and this without any effort or exertion of your own, but purely by the good-will of Fortune. I know the pride and naughtiness of thy heart, and sincerely do I wish that thou hadst more beatings to thank me for, than those which thou acknowledge so gratefully. Then had I thumped these Quixotic expectations out of thee, and thou hadst not, as now, conceived thyself to be the hero of some romantic history, and converted, in vain imaginations, honest Griffiths, citizen and broker, who never knew more than the needful upon his quarterly epistles, into some Alexander or sage Alquife, the mystical and magical protector of peerless destiny. But I know not how it was, thy skull got softer, I think, and my knuckles became softer; not to mention that length thou didst begin to show about thee a spark of something generous, which I was bound to respect at least, if I did not fear it. And while I speak of this, it is not much amiss to advise thee to let a little this cook-a-hoop courage of thine. I fear much that, in a hot-mettled horse, it will carry the owner into some scrape, out of which he will find it difficult to extricate himself, especially if the good spirit which bore thee thither should chance to fail thee at a moment. Remember, Darsie, thou art not naturally courageous; on the contrary, we have long since agreed that, quiet as I am, I have an advantage in this important particular. My courage consists, I think, in strength of nerves and constitutional indifference to danger; though it never pushes me on adventure, secures me in full possession of my recollection, and tolerably complete self-possession, when actual courage; highness of spirit, and desire of distinction; qualities which render thee alive to the love of fame, and deaf to the consideration of danger, until it forces itself suddenly upon thee. I do not know whether it is from my having caught my father's apprehensions, or that I have reason to entertain doubts of my own, I often think that this wildfire chase of romantic situation and adventure would lead thee into some mischief; and then what would become of the airford? They might make whom they pleased Lord-Advo-

cate or Solicitor-General, I should never have the heart to strive for it. All my exertions are intended to vindicate myself one day in your eyes; and I think I should not care a farthing for the embroidered silk gown, more than for an old woman's apron, unless I had hoped that thou shouldst be walking the boards to admire, and perhaps envy me.

That this may be the case, I prithee—beware! See not a Dulcinea in every slipshod girl, who, with blue eyes, fair hair, a tattered plaid, and a willow-wand in her gripe, drives out the village cows to the loaning. Do not think you will meet a gallant Valentine in every English rider, or an Orson in every Highland drover. View things as they are, and not as they may be magnified through thy teeming fancy. I have seen thee look at an old gravel-pit, till thou made out capes, and bays, and inlets, crags and precipices, and the whole stupendous scenery of the Isle of Feroe, in what was, to all ordinary eyes, a mere horse-pond. Besides, did I not once find thee gazing with respect at a lizard, in the attitude of one who looks upon a crocodile? Now this is, doubtless, so far a harmless exercise of your imagination; for the puddle cannot drown you, nor the Liliputian alligator eat you up. But it is different in society, where you cannot mistake the character of those you converse with, or suffer your fancy to exaggerate their qualities, good or bad, without exposing yourself, not only to ridicule, but to great and serious inconvenience. Keep guard, therefore, on your imagination, my dear Darsie; let your own friend assure you, it is the point of your character now pregnant with peril to its good and generous owner. Adieu! let the franks of the worthy peer remain unemployed; above all, *memor mei.* A.]

LETTER III.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Shepherd's B.

I HAVE received thine absurd and most conceited epistle. Well for thee that, Lovelace and Belford-like, we came under a convention to pardon every species of liberty which we may take of each other; since, upon my word, there are some reflections in the last which would otherwise have obliged me to return forthwith to Edinburgh, merely to show you I was not what you took me for. Why, what a pair of prigs hast thou made of us!—I plunging and scraping, without having courage to get out of them—thy sagacious self, afraid to put one foot before the other, lest it should run into the faintness and coldness of heart, while all the world were driving speed past thee. Thou a portrait-painter!—I tell thee, Alan, I have seen a better seated on the fourth round of a ladder, and painting a bare-breeched Highlander, holding a pint-stoup as big as himself.

booted Lowlander, in a bobwig, supporting a glass of like dimensions; the whole being designed to represent the sign of the Salvation.

How hadst thou the heart to represent thine own individual self, with all thy motions, like those of a great Dutch doll, depending on the pressure of certain springs, as duty, reflection, and the like; without the impulse of which, thou wouldst doubtless have me believe thou wouldst not budge an inch! But have I not seen Gravity out of his bed at midnight? and must I, in plain terms, remind thee of certain mad pranks? Thou hadst ever, with the gravest sentiments in thy mouth, and the most starched reserve in thy manner, a kind lumbering proclivity towards mischief, although with more inclination to set it agoing than address to carry it through; and I cannot but chuckle internally, when I think of having seen my most venerable monitor, the future President of some high Scottish Court, puffing, blowing, and floundering, like a clumsy cart-horse in a bog, where efforts to extricate himself only plunged him deeper at every backward struggle, till some one—I myself, for example—took compassion on the moaning monster, and dragged him out by mane and

tail for me, my portrait is, if possible, even more scandalously caricatured. I fail or quail in spirit at the upcome! Where canst thou show me the least symptom of the recreant temper with which thou hast invested me (as I trust), merely to set off the solid and impassible dignity of thine own stupid indifference? If you ever saw me quail, be assured that my flesh, like that of the old Spanish gentleman, only quaked at the dangers into which my spirit was about to plunge. Seriously, Alan, this imputed poverty of spirit is a shabby charge to bring against your friend. I have examined myself as honestly as I can, being, in very truth, a little hurt at your having such hard thoughts of me, and on my life I can see no reason for them. I allow you have, perhaps, some advantage of me in the coolness and indifference of your temper; but I should despise myself if I were conscious of the deficiency in courage which you seem strong enough to impute to me. However, I suppose this ungracious proceeds from sincere anxiety for my safety; and so viewing it, I allow it as I would do medicine from a friendly doctor, although believed in my heart he had mistaken my complaint.

This offensive insinuation disposed of, I thank thee, Alan, for the contents of thy epistle. I thought I heard your good father pronouncing the word Noble-House with a mixture of contempt and displeasure, and the very name of the poor little hamlet were odious to him, or, if you had selected, out of all Scotland, the very place at which he had no call to dine. But if he had had any particular aversion to that blameless village and very sorry inn, is it not his own fault that he did not accept the invitation of the Laird of Glengallacher, who was not a buck in what he emphatically calls "his country?" Truth be told, I had a strong desire to have complied with his Lairdship's invitation. To shoot a buck! Think how magnificent an idea to one who has never shot anything but hedge-sparrows, and that with a pistol, purchased at a broker's stand in the Cowgate!—You,

who stand upon your courage, may remember that I took the risk of firing the said pistol for the first time, while you stood at twenty yards' distance; and that, when you were persuaded it would go off without bursting, forgetting all law but that of the biggest and strongest, you possessed yourself of it exclusively for the rest of the holidays. Such a day's sport was no complete introduction to the noble art of deer-stalking, as it is practised in the Highlands; but should not have scrupled to accept honest Glengallacher's invitation at the risk of firing a rifle for the first time, had it not been for the outcry which your father made at my proposal, in the full ardour of his zeal for King George, the Hanover succession, and the Presbyterian faith. I wish I had stood out, since I have gained so little upon his good opinion by submission. All his impressions concerning the Highlanders are taken from the recollections of the Forty-five, when he retreated from the West-Port with his brother volunteers, each to the fortalice of his own separate dwelling, so soon as they heard the Adventurer was arrived with his clans as near them as Kirkliston. The flight of Falkirk—*parma non bene selecta*—in which I think your sire had his share with the undaunted western regiment, does not seem to have improved his taste for the company of the Highlanders, (quære, Alan, dost thou derive the courage thou make such boast of from an hereditary source?)—and stories of Rob Roy Macgregor, and Sergeant Alan Mhor Cameron,¹ have served to paint them in still more sable colours to his imagination.

Now, from all I can understand, these ideas, as applied to the present state of the country, are absolutely chimerical. The Pretender is no more remembered in the Highlands, than if the poor gentlemen were gathered to his hundred and eight fathers, whose portraits adorn the ancient walls of Holyrood; the broadswords have passed into other hands; the targets are used to cover the butter-churns; and the race has sunk, or is fast sinking, from ruffling bullies into rascals and cheaters. Indeed, it was partly my conviction that there is little to be seen in the north, which, arriving at your father's conclusion though from different premises, inclined my course in this direction where perhaps I shall see as little.

One thing, however, I have seen; and it was with pleasure more indescribable that I was debarred from treading the land which my eyes were permitted to gaze upon, like those of the dying prophet from the top of Mount Pisgah,—I have seen, in a word, the fruitful shores of merry England; merry England! of which I believe myself a native, and on which I gaze, even while raging floods and unstable quicksands divide us, with the filial affection of a dutiful son.

Thou canst not have forgotten, Alan—for when didst thou forget what was interesting to thy friend?—that the same letter from my friend Griffiths, which doubled my income, and placed my money at my own free disposal, contained a prohibitory clause, by which, for no reason none assigned, I was prohibited, as I respected my present safety and future fortunes, from visiting England; every other

¹ Of Rob Roy we have had more than enough. Alan Cameron, commonly called Sergeant Mhor, a freebooter of the same period, was equally remarkable for strength, courage, and generosity.

the British dominions, and a tour, if I pleased, on the Continent, being left to my own choice.—Where is the tale, Alan, of a covered dish in the midst of a royal banquet, upon which the eyes of every guest were immediately fixed, neglecting all the dainties with which the table was loaded? This cause of banishment from England—from my native country—from the land of the brave, and the wise, and the free—affects me more than I am rejoiced by the freedom and independence assigned to me in all other respects. Thus, in making this extreme boundary of the country which I am forbidden to tread, I resemble the poor tethered horse, which, you may have observed, is always grazing on the very verge of the circle to which it is limited by its halter.

Do not accuse me of romance for obeying this impulse towards the South; nor suppose that, to satisfy the imaginary longing of an idle curiosity, I am in any danger of risking the solid comforts of my present condition. Whoever has hitherto taken charge of my motions, has shown me, by convincing proofs more weighty than the assurances which they have withheld, that my real advantage is their principal object. I should be, therefore, worse than a fool did I object to their authority, even when it seems somewhat capriciously exercised; for assuredly, at my age, I might—intrusted as I am with the care and management of myself in every other particular—expect that the cause of excluding me from England should be frankly and fully stated for my own consideration and guidance. However, I will not grumble about the matter. I shall know the whole story in a day, I suppose; and perhaps, as you sometimes surmise, I shall find there is any mighty matter in it after all.

Yet one cannot help wondering—but plague on it, if I wonder any longer, my letter will be as full of wonders as one of Katterfelto's advertisements. I have a month's mind, instead of this damnable succession of guesses and forebodings, to give thee the history of a real adventure which befell me yesterday; though I am sure you will, as usual, turn the opposite side of the spy-glass on my poor narrative, and reduce *more tuo*, to the most petty trivialities, the circumstance to which thou accusest me of giving undue consequence. Hang thee, Alan, thou art as unfit a confidant for a youth-gallant with some spice of imagination, as the old taciturn secret-keeper of Facardin of Trebizond. Nevertheless, we must each perform our separate destinies. I am doomed to see, act, and tell;—thou, a Dutchman, enclosed in the same diligence with a Gascon, to stand and shrug thy shoulders.

Dumfries, the capital town of this county, I have but little to say, and will not abuse your patience by reminding you, that it is situated on the gallant river Nith, and that its churchyard, the highest point of the whole town, commands an extensive and fine prospect. Never will I take the traveller's privilege of inflicting upon you the whole history of Bruce poniarding the Red Comyn in the Church of the Dominicans at this place, and becoming a king and patriot, since he had been a church-breaker and a murderer. The present generation remember and justify the deed, observing it was only a private church—in evidence whereof, its walls have been so com-

pletely demolished that no vestiges of them remain. They are sturdy set of true-blue Presbyterians, these burghers of Dumfries men after your father's own heart, zealous for the Protestant succession—the rather that many of the great families around are suspected to be of a different way of thinking, and shared, a great many of them, in the insurrection of the Fifteen, and some of the more recent business of the Forty-five. The town itself suffered in the latter era; for Lord Elcho, with a large party of the rebel levied a severe contribution upon Dumfries, on account of the citizens having annoyed the rear of the Chevalier during his march into England.

Many of these particulars I learned from Provost C——, who, happening to see me in the marketplace, remembered that I was an intimate of your father's, and very kindly asked me to dinner. Pray tell your father that the effects of his kindness to me follow me everywhere. I became tired, however, of this pretty town in the course of twenty-four hours, and crept along the coast eastward amusing myself with looking out for objects of antiquity, and sometimes making, or attempting to make, use of my new angling-rod. By the way, old Cotton's instructions, by which I hoped to qualify myself for one of the gentle society of anglers, are not worth a farthing for this meridian. I learned this by mere accident, after I had waited four mortal hours. I shall never forget an impudent urchin, a cowherd, about twelve years old, without either brogue or bonnet, bare-legged, and with a very indifferent pair of breeches—how the villain grinned in scorn at my landing-net, my plummet, and the gorgeous jury of flies which I had assembled to destroy all the fish in the river. I was induced at last to lend the rod to the sneering scoundrel, to see what he would make of it; and he had not long half filled my basket in an hour, but literally taught me to kill the trouts with my own hand. This, and Sam having found the hay and oats, not forgetting the ale, very good at this small inn, first made me take the fancy of resting here for a day or two; and I have given my grinning blackguard of a Piscator leave to attend on me, by paying sixpence a-day for a herdboy in his stead.

A notably clean Englishwoman keeps this small house, and the bedroom is sweetened with lavender, has a clean sash-window, and the walls are, moreover, adorned with ballads of Fair Rosamond and Cruel Barbara Allan. The woman's accent, though uncouth enough, sounds yet kindly in my ear; for I have never yet forgotten the desolate effect produced on my infant organs, when I heard on the sides your slow and broad northern pronunciation, which was to me the tone of a foreign land. I am sensible I myself have since that time acquired Scotch in perfection, and many a Scotticism withal. Still the sound of the English accentuation comes to my ears as the tone of a friend; and even when heard from the mouth of some wandering beggar, it has seldom failed to charm forth my mite. You Scotch who are so proud of your own nationality, must make due allowance for that of other folks.

On the next morning I was about to set forth to the stream where I had commenced angler the night before, but was prevented, by

heavy shower of rain, from stirring abroad the whole forenoon; during all which time, I heard my varlet of a guide as loud with his backguard jokes in the kitchen, as a footman in the shilling gallery;—so little are modesty and innocence the inseparable companions of rusticity and seclusion.

When after dinner the day cleared, and we at length sallied out to the river-side, I found myself subjected to a new trick on the part of my accomplished preceptor. Apparently, he liked fishing himself better than the trouble of instructing an awkward novice, such as I; and in hopes of exhausting my patience, and inducing me to resign the rod, as I had done the preceding day, my friend contrived to keep me thrashing the water more than an hour with a pointless hook. I detected this trick at last, by observing the rogue grinning with delight when he saw a large trout rise and dash harmless away from the angle. I gave him a sound cuff, Alan; but the next moment was sorry, and, to make amends, yielded possession of the fishing-rod for the rest of the evening, he undertaking to bring me home a dish of trouts for my supper, in atonement for his offences. Having thus got honourably rid of the trouble of amusing myself a way I cared not for, I turned my steps towards the sea, or rather the Solway Firth, which here separates the two sister kingdoms, and which lay at about a mile's distance, by a pleasant walk over sandy rolls covered with short herbage, which you call Links, and we English, Downs.

But the rest of my adventure would weary out my fingers, and must be deferred until to-morrow, when you shall hear from me, by way of continuation: and in the meanwhile, to prevent over-hasty conclusions, I must just hint to you, we are but yet on the verge of an adventure which it is my purpose to communicate.

LETTER IV.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Shepherd's Bush.

MENTIONED in my last, that having abandoned my fishing-rod as unprofitable implement, I crossed over the open downs which led me from the margin of the Solway. When I reached the banks of the great estuary, which are here very bare and exposed, the waters had receded from the large and level space of sand, through which a stream, now feeble and fordable, found its way to the ocean. The whole was illuminated by the beams of the low and burning sun, who showed his ruddy front, like a warrior prepared for battle, over a huge battlemented and turreted wall of crimson and gold clouds, which appeared like an immense Gothic fortress, into which the Lord of day was descending. His setting rays glimmered upon the wet surface of the sands, and the numberless pools

of water by which it was covered, where the inequality of the ground had occasioned their being left by the tide.

The scene was animated by the exertions of a number of horsemen, who were actually employed in hunting salmon. Ay, Alan, lift up your hands and eyes as you will, I can give their mode of fishing no name so appropriate; for they chased the fish at full gallop, and struck them with their barbed spears, as you see hunters spearin boars in the old tapestry. The salmon, to be sure, take the thing more quietly than the boars; but they are so swift in their own element, that to pursue and strike them is the task of a good horseman with a quick eye, a determined hand, and full command both of his horse and weapon. The shouts of the fellows as they galloped up and down in the animating exercise—their loud bursts of laughter when any of their number caught a fall—and still louder acclamations when any of the party made a capital stroke with his lance—gave so much animation to the whole scene, that I caught the enthusiasm of the sport, and ventured forward a considerable space on the sands. The feats of one horseman, in particular, called forth so repeatedly the clamorous applause of his companions, that the very banks rang again with their shouts. He was a tall man, well mounted on a strong black horse, which he caused to turn and win like a bird in the air, carried a longer spear than the others, and wore a sort of fur cap or bonnet, with a short feather in it, which gave him, on the whole, rather a superior appearance to the other fishermen. He seemed to hold some sort of authority among them, and occasionally directed their motions both by voice and hand; and which times I thought his gestures were striking, and his voice uncommonly sonorous and commanding.

The riders began to make for the shore, and the interest of the scene was almost over, while I lingered on the sands, with my look turned to the shores of England, still gilded by the sun's last ray, and, as it seemed, scarce distant a mile from me. The anxious thoughts which haunt me began to muster in my bosom, and my feet slowly and insensibly approached the river which divided me from the forbidden precincts, though without any formed intention when my steps were arrested by the sound of a horse galloping; and as I turned, the rider (the same fisherman whom I had formerly distinguished) called out to me, in an abrupt manner, "Soho, brother, you are too late for Bowness to-night—the tide will make presently."

I turned my head and looked at him without answering; for, my thinking, his sudden appearance (or rather, I should say, his unexpected approach) had, amidst the gathering shadows and lingering light, something in it which was wild and ominous.

"Are you deaf?" he added—"or are you mad?—or have you no mind for the next world?"

"I am a stranger," I answered, "and had no other purpose than looking on at the fishing—I am about to return to the side I came from."

"Best make haste, then," said he. "He that dreams on the bank of the Solway, may wake in the next world. The sky threatens a blast that will bring in the waves three feet abreast."

So saying, he turned his horse and rode off, while I began to walk back towards the Scottish shore, a little alarmed at what I had heard; for the tide advances with such rapidity upon these fatal sands, that well-mounted horsemen lay aside hopes of safety, if they see its white surge advancing while they are yet at a distance from the bank.

These recollections grew more agitating, and, instead of walking deliberately, I began a race as fast as I could, feeling, or thinking I did, each pool of salt water through which I splashed grow deeper and deeper. At length the surface of the sand did seem considerably more intersected with pools and channels full of water—either that the tide was really beginning to influence the bed of the estuary, or, I must own is equally probable, that I had, in the hurry and confusion of my retreat, involved myself in difficulties which I had avoided in my more deliberate advance. Either way, it was rather an unpromising state of affairs, for the sands at the same time turned softer, and my footsteps, so soon as I had passed, were instantly filled with water. I began to have odd recollections concerning the snugness of my father's parlour, and the secure footing afforded by the pavement of Brown's Square and Scots Close, when my better genius, the tall fisherman, appeared once more close to my side, he and his noble horse looming gigantic in the now darkening twilight.

"Are you mad?" he said, in the same deep tone which had before rung in my ear, "or are you weary of your life?—You will be presently amongst the quicksands."—I professed my ignorance of the matter, to which he only replied, "There is no time for prating—get up behind me."

I was probably expected me to spring from the ground with the activity which these Borderers have, by constant practice, acquired in everything relating to horsemanship; but as I stood irresolute, he extended his hand, and grasping mine, bid me place my foot on the sole of his boot, and thus raised me in a trice to the croupe of his horse. I was scarcely securely seated, ere he shook the reins of his horse, who instantly sprung forward; but annoyed, doubtless, by the unusual burden, treated us to two or three bounds, accompanied by many flourishes of his hind heels. The rider sat like a tower, notwithstanding that the unexpected plunging of the animal threw me forward upon him. The horse was soon compelled to submit to the discipline of the spur and bridle, and went off at a steady hand-gallop; shortening the devious, for it was by no means a direct path, by which the rider, avoiding the loose quicksands, made for the northern shore.

My friend, perhaps I may call him my preserver,—for to a stranger in this situation was fraught with real danger,—continued to press on at the same speedy pace, but in perfect silence, and I was under too much anxiety of mind to disturb him with any questions. At length I arrived at a part of the shore with which I was utterly unacquainted, and I alighted and began to return, in the best fashion I could, my thanks for the important service which he had just rendered me. The stranger only replied by an impatient "Pshaw!" and was about to ride off, and leave me to my own resources, when I implored

him to complete his work of kindness by directing me to Shepherd's Bush, which was, as I informed him, my home for the present.

"To Shepherd's Bush?" he said; "it is but three miles, but if you know not the land better than the sand, you may break your neck before you get there; for it is no road for a moping boy in a dark night; and, besides, there are the brook and the fens to cross."

I was a little dismayed at this communication of such difficulties as my habits had not called on me to contend with. Once more the idea of thy father's fireside came across me: and I could have been well contented to have swop'd the romance of my situation, together with the glorious independence of control, which I possessed at the moment, for the comforts of the chimney-corner, though I were obliged to keep my eyes chained to Erskine's Larger Institutes.

I asked my new friend whether he could not direct me to any house of public entertainment for the night; and supposing it probable he was himself a poor man, I added, with the conscious dignity of a well-filled pocket-book, that I could make it worth any man's while to oblige me. The fisherman making no answer, I turned away from him with as gallant an appearance of indifference as I could command, and began to take, as I thought, the path which he had pointed out to me.

His deep voice immediately sounded after me to recall me. "Stay, young man, stay—you have mistaken the road already.—I wonder your friends sent out such an inconsiderate youth, without some one wiser than himself to take care of him."

"Perhaps they might not have done so," said I, "if I had any friends who cared about the matter."

"Well, sir," he said, "it is not my custom to open my house to strangers, but your pinch is like to be a smart one; for, besides the risk from bad roads, fords, and broken ground, and the night, which looks both black and gloomy, there is bad company on the road sometimes—at least it has a bad name, and some have come to harm so that I think I must for once make my rule give way to your necessity, and give you a night's lodging in my cottage."

Why was it, Alan, that I could not help giving an involuntary shudder at receiving an invitation so seasonable in itself, and so suitable to my naturally inquisitive disposition? I easily suppressed this untimely sensation; and as I returned thanks, and expressed my hope that I should not disarrange his family, I once more dropped a hint of my desire to make compensation for any trouble I might occasion. The man answered very coldly, "Your presence will no doubt give me trouble, sir, but it is of a kind which your purse cannot compensate; in a word, although I am content to receive you as my guest, I am no publican to call a reckoning."

I begged his pardon, and, at his instance, once more seated myself behind him upon the good horse, which went forth steady as before—the moon, whenever she could penetrate the clouds, throwing a huge shadow of the animal, with its double burden, on the wild and bare ground over which we passed.

Thou mayst laugh till thou lettest the letter fall if thou wilt, but it reminded me of the Magician Atlantes on his hippogriff, with a knight trussed up behind him, in the manner Ariosto has depicted that man

. Thou art, I know, matter-of-fact enough to affect contempt of that fascinating and delicious poem; but think not that, to conform to thy bad taste, I shall forbear any suitable illustration which now hereafter may occur to me.

On we went, the sky blackening around us, and the wind beginning to pipe such a wild and melancholy tune as best suited the hollow winds of the advancing tide, which I could hear at a distance, like the roar of some immense monster defrauded of its prey. At length our course was crossed by a deep dell or dingle, such as you call in some parts of Scotland a den, and in others a cleuch, or narrow glen. It seemed, by the broken glances which the moon continued to throw upon it, to be steep, precipitous, and full of trees, which are, generally speaking, rather scarce upon these shores. The descent by which we plunged into this dell was both steep and rugged, with two or three abrupt turnings; but neither danger nor darkness impeded the motion of the black horse, who seemed rather to spring upon his haunches than to gallop down the pass, throwing me on the shoulders of the athletic rider, who, sustaining no inconvenience by the circumstance, continued to press the horse forward with his heel, steadily supporting him at the same time by raising his bridle hand, until we stood in safety at the bottom of the steep. Not a little to my consolation, as, friend Alan, thou mayst easily perceive.

After a very short advance up the glen, the bottom of which we had attained by this ugly descent, brought us in front of two or three cottages, one of which another blink of moonshine enabled me to rate rather better than those of the Scottish peasantry in this part of the world; for the sashes seemed glazed, and there were what are called storm-windows in the roof, giving symptoms of the magnificence of a second story. The scene around was very interesting; the cottages, and the yards or crofts annexed to them, occupied a *burgh*, or holm, of two acres, which a brook of some consequence (having edged from its roar) had left upon one side of the little glen while following its course close to the farther bank, and which appeared to be shaded and darkened with trees, while the level space beneath enjoyed such stormy smiles as the moon had that night to bestow.

I had little time for observation, for my companion's loud whistle, answered by an equally loud halloo, speedily brought to the door of the principal cottage a man and a woman, together with two large poundland dogs, the deep baying of which I had for some time heard. A yelping terrier or two, which had joined the concert, were attracted at the presence of my conductor, and began to whine, jump and fawn upon him. The female drew back when she beheld a stranger; the man, who had a lighted lantern, advanced, and without observation, received the horse from my host, and led him, doubtless to a stable, while I followed my conductor into the house. When I passed the *hallan*,¹ we entered a well-sized apartment, with a brick floor, where a fire blazed (much to my contentment) in a chimney projecting sort of a chimney, common in Scottish houses.

¹ The partition which divides a Scottish cottage.

There were stone seats within the chimney; and ordinary utensils mixed with fishing-spears, nets, and similar implements of sport, were hung around the walls of the place. The female who had first appeared at the door had now retreated into a side apartment. I was presently followed by my guide, after he had silently motioned me to a seat; and their place was supplied by an elderly woman in a grey stuff gown, with a check apron and *toy*, obviously a meagre though neater in her dress than is usual in her apparent rank—advantage which was counterbalanced by a very forbidding aspect. But the most singular part of her attire, in this very Protestant country, was a rosary, in which the smaller beads were black oak, those indicating the *pater-noster* of silver, with a crucifix of the same metal.

This person made preparations for supper, by spreading a cloth though coarse over a large oaken table, placing trenchers and salt upon it, and arranging the fire to receive a gridiron. I observed her motions in silence; for she took no sort of notice of me, and as her looks were singularly forbidding, I felt no disposition to commence conversation.

When this duenna had made all preliminary arrangements, he took from the well-filled pouch of my conductor, which he had hung up by the door, one or two salmon, or *grilses*, as the smaller sort is termed, and selecting that which seemed best, and in highest season, began to cut it into slices, and to prepare a *grillade*; the savoury smell of which affected me so powerfully, that I began sincerely to hope that no delay would intervene between the platter and the plate.

As this thought came across me, the man who had conducted me on horse to the stable entered the apartment, and discovered to my countenance yet more uninviting than that of the old crone who was performing with such dexterity the office of cook to the party. He was perhaps sixty years old; yet his brow was not much furrowed and his jet black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-chested, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired perhaps by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance—far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair—a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unpaired teeth, of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre, completed this disagreeable portrait. He was clad like a fisherman, in jacket and trousers of blue cloth commonly used by seamen, and had a Dutch case-knife like that of a Hamburgh skipper, stuck into a broad buff belt, which seemed as if it might occasionally sustain weapons of a description still less equivocally calculated for violence.

This man gave me an inquisitive, and, as I thought, a suspicious look upon entering the apartment; but without any farther notice of me, took up the office of arranging the table, which the old woman had abandoned for that of cooking the fish, and with more attention than I expected from a person of his coarse appearance, placed

rs at the head of the table, and two stools below; accommodat-
each seat to a cover, beside which he placed an allowance of
y-bread, and a small jug, which he replenished with ale from a
e black jack. Three of these jugs were of ordinary earthenware,
he fourth, which he placed by the right-hand cover at the upper
of the table, was a flagon of silver, and displayed armorial bear-

Beside this flagon he placed a salt-cellar of silver, handsomely
ght, containing salt of exquisite whiteness, with pepper and
r spices. A sliced lemon was also presented on a small silver
r. The two large water-dogs, who seemed perfectly to under-
d the nature of the preparations, seated themselves one on each
of the table, to be ready to receive their portion of the enter-
nent. I never saw finer animals, or which seemed to be more
enced by a sense of decorum, excepting that they slobbered a
as the rich scent from the chimney was wafted past their noses.
small dogs ensconced themselves beneath the table.

am aware that I am dwelling upon trivial and ordinary circum-
ces, and that perhaps I may weary out your patience in doing
But conceive me alone in this strange place, which seemed,
the universal silence, to be the very temple of Harpocrates—
ember that this is my first excursion from home—forget not
the manner in which I had been brought hither had the dignity
anger and something the air of an adventure, and that there
a mysterious incongruity in all I had hitherto witnessed; and
will not, I think, be surprised that these circumstances, though
g, should force themselves on my notice at the time, and dwell
y memory afterwards.

at a fisher, who pursued the sport perhaps for his amusement
ell as profit, should be well mounted and better lodged than the
r class of peasantry, had in it nothing surprising; but there was
ething about all that I saw which seemed to intimate that I was
er in the abode of a decayed gentleman, who clung to a few of
orms and observances of former rank, than in that of a common
unt, raised above his fellows by comparative opulence.

sides the articles of plate which I have already noticed, the old
now lighted and placed on the table a silver lamp, or *cruisie*,
e Scottish term it, filled with very pure oil, which in burning
ed an aromatic fragrance, and gave me a more perfect view of
ottage walls, which I had hitherto only seen dimly by the light
e fire. The *bink*,¹ with its usual arrangement of pewter and
enware, which was most strictly and critically clean, glanced
the flame of the lamp merrily from one side of the apartment.
recess, formed by the small bow of a latticed window, was a
writing-desk of walnut-tree wood, curiously carved, above
arose shelves of the same, which supported a few books and
s. The opposite side of the recess contained (as far as I could
n, for it lay in shadow, and I could at any rate have seen it but
fectly from the place where I was seated) one or two guns,
ner with swords, pistols, and other arms—a collection which,

¹ The frame of wooden shelves placed in a Scottish kitchen for holding plates.

in a poor cottage, and in a country so peaceful, appeared singular at least, if not even somewhat suspicious.

All these observations, you may suppose, were made much sooner than I have recorded, or you (if you have not skipped) have been able to read them. They were already finished, and I was considering how I should open some communication with the mute inhabitants of the mansion, when my conductor re-entered from the side door by which he had made his exit.

He had now thrown off his rough riding-cap, and his coarse jockey coat, and stood before me in a grey jerkin trimmed with black which sat close to, and set off, his large and sinewy frame, and a pair of trousers of a lighter colour, cut as close to the body as those are used by Highlandmen. His whole dress was of finer cloth than that of the old man; and his linen, so minute was my observation, clean and unsullied. His shirt was without ruffles, and tied at collar with a black riband, which showed his strong and muscular neck rising from it, like that of an ancient Hercules. His head was small, with a large forehead, and well-formed ears. He wore neither peruke nor hair powder; and his chestnut locks, curling close to the head, like those of an antique statue, showed not the least touch of time, though the owner must have been at least fifty. His features were high and prominent in such a degree, that one knew whether to term them harsh or handsome. In either case, sparkling grey eye, aquiline nose, and well-formed mouth, combined to render his physiognomy noble and expressive. An air of sadness or severity, or of both, seemed to indicate a melancholy, and, at the same time, a haughty temper. I could not help running my mind over the ancient heroes, to whom I might assimilate the noble form and countenance before me. He was too young, and evinced little resignation to his fate, to resemble Belisarius. Coriolanus standing by the hearth of Tullus Aufidius, came nearer the mark, yet the gloomy and haughty look of the stranger had, perhaps, more of Marius, seated among the ruins of Carthage.

While I was lost in these imaginations, my host stood by the fire, gazing on me with the same attention which I paid to him, and so embarrassed by his look, I was about to break silence at all hazards. But the supper, now placed upon the table, reminded me, by its appearance, of those wants which I had almost forgotten while I was gazing on the fine form of my conductor. He spoke at length, and I almost started at the deep rich tone of his voice, though what he said was but to invite me to sit down to the table. He himself assumed the seat of honour, beside which the silver flagon was placed, and beckoned to me to sit down beside him.

Thou knowest thy father's strict and excellent domestic discipline has trained me to hear the invocation of a blessing before we begin the daily bread, for which we are taught to pray—I pause a moment, and, without designing to do so, I suppose my manner made him sensible of what I expected. The two domestics, inferiors, as I should have before observed, were already seated at the bottom of the table, when my host shot a glance of a very peculiar expression towards the old man, observing, with something

reaching to a sneer, "Cristal Nixon, say grace—the gentleman sets one."

The foul fiend shall be clerk, and say amen, when I turn chaplain," growled out the party addressed, in tones which might have made me the condition of a dying bear; "if the gentleman is a whig, may please himself with his own mummary. My faith is neither word nor writ, but in barley bread and brown ale."

"Mabel Moffat," said my guide, looking at the old woman, and raising his sonorous voice, probably because she was hard of hearing, "canst thou ask a blessing upon our victuals?"

The old woman shook her head, kissed the cross which hung from her rosary, and was silent.

"Mabel will say grace for no heretic," said the master of the house, with the same latent sneer on his brow and in his accent.

At the same moment, the side-door already mentioned opened, and the young woman (so she proved) whom I had first seen at the door of the cottage, advanced a little way into the room, then stopped fully, as if she had observed that I was looking at her, and asked the master of the house, "if he had called?"

"Not louder than to make old Mabel hear me," he replied; "and," he added, as she turned to retire, "it is a shame a stranger should see a house where not one of the family can or will say a word,—do thou be our chaplain."

The girl, who was really pretty, came forward with timid modesty, apparently unconscious that she was doing anything uncommon, and pronounced the benediction in a silver-toned voice, and with affectless simplicity—her cheek colouring just so much as to show that on such a solemn occasion, she would have felt more embarrassed.

Now, if thou expectest a fine description of this young woman, Fairford, in order to entitle thee to taunt me with having no Dulcinea in the inhabitant of a fisherman's cottage on the Frith, thou shalt be disappointed; for, having said she was very pretty, and that she was a sweet and gentle-speaking creature, I have said all concerning her that I can tell thee. She ceased when the benediction was spoken.

The host, with a muttered remark on the cold of our ride, and the fair air of the Solway Sands, to which he did not seem to wish an answer, loaded my plate from Mabel's grillade, which, with a large silver bowl of potatoes, formed our whole meal. A sprinkling of the lemon gave a much higher zest than the usual condiment of vinegar; and I promise you that, whatever I might hitherto have felt of curiosity or suspicion, did not prevent me from making an excellent supper, during which little passed betwixt me and my entertainer, unless that he did the usual honours of the table with courtesy, indeed, but without even the affectation of hearty hospitality, which those in his (apparent) condition generally affect on such occasions, even when they do not actually feel it. On the contrary, his manner seemed that of a polished landlord towards an expected and unwelcome guest, whom, for the sake of his own pocket, he receives with civility, but without either good-will or cordialness.

If you ask how I learned all this, I cannot tell you ; nor, were I write down at length the insignificant intercourse which took place between us, would it perhaps serve to justify these observations. It is sufficient to say, that in helping his dogs, which he did from time to time with great liberality, he seemed to discharge a duty much more pleasing to himself, than when he paid the same attention to his guest. Upon the whole, the result on my mind was to tell it you.

When supper was over, a small case-bottle of brandy, in a curio frame of silver filigree, circulated to the guests. I had already taken a small glass of the liquor, and, when it had passed to Mabel and Cristal, and was again returned to the upper end of the table, could not help taking the bottle in my hand, to look more at the armorial bearings, which were chased with considerable taste on the silver framework. Encountering the eye of my entertainer, I instantly saw that my curiosity was highly distasteful ; he frowned, bit his lip, and showed such uncontrollable signs of impatience, that, setting the bottle immediately down, I attempted some apology. On this he did not deign either to reply, or even to listen ; and Cristal, at a signal from his master, removed the object of my curiosity, as well as the cup, upon which the same arms were engraved.

There ensued an awkward pause, which I endeavoured to break by observing, that "I feared my intrusion upon his hospitality had caused some inconvenience to his family to some inconvenience."

"I hope you see no appearance of it, sir," he replied, with civility. "What inconvenience a family so retired as ours may suffer from receiving an unexpected guest is like to be trifling in comparison of what the visitor himself sustains from want of his accustomed comforts. So far, therefore, as our connection stands, our accounts stand clear."

Notwithstanding this discouraging reply, I blundered on, as usual in such cases, wishing to appear civil, and being, perhaps, in reality the very reverse. "I was afraid," I said, "that my presence had banished one of the family" (looking at the side-door) "from the table."

"If," he coldly replied, "I meant the young woman whom I have seen in the apartment, he bid me observe that there was room enough at the table for her to have seated herself, and meat enough, such as it was, for her supper. I might, therefore, be assured, if she had chosen it, she would have supped with us."

There was no dwelling on this or any other topic longer ; for the entertainer, taking up the lamp, observed, that "my wet clothes might reconcile me for the night to their custom of keeping early hours ; that he was under the necessity of going abroad by post to-day to-morrow morning, and would call me up at the same time to point out the way by which I was to return to the Shepherd's Bush."

This left no opening for farther explanation ; nor was there room for it on the usual terms of civility ; for, as he neither asked my name, nor expressed the least interest concerning my condition, the obliged person—had no pretence to trouble him with such inquiries on my part.

He took up the lamp, and led me through the side-door into a very small room, where a bed had been hastily arranged for my accommodation, and, putting down the lamp, directed me to leave my wet shoes on the outside of the door, that they might be exposed to the sun during the night. He then left me, having muttered something which was meant to pass for good-night.

I obeyed his directions with respect to my clothes, the rather that in spite of the spirits which I had drunk, I felt my teeth begin to chatter, and received various hints from an aguish feeling, that a hard-bred youth, like myself, could not at once rush into all the hardihood of country sports with impunity. But my bed, though coarse and hard, was dry and clean; and I soon was so little occupied with heats and tremors, as to listen with interest to a heavy foot, which seemed to be that of my landlord, traversing the boards (there was no ceiling, as you may believe) which roofed my apartment. Light, coming through these rude planks, became visible as soon as my lamp was extinguished; and as the noise of the slow, solemn, and regular step continued, and I could distinguish that the person turned and returned as he reached the end of the apartment, it seemed strange to me that the walker was engaged in no domestic occupation, but merely pacing to and fro for his own pleasure. "An odd amusement at this," I thought, "for one who had been engaged at least a part of the preceding day in violent exercise, and who talked of rising at the peep of dawn on the ensuing morning."

Meantime I heard the storm, which had been brewing during the day, begin to descend with a vengeance; sounds, as of distant thunder (the noise of the more distant waves, doubtless, on the shore), mingled with the roaring of the neighbouring torrent, and with the sighing, groaning, and even screaming of the trees in the glen, whose boughs were tormented by the gale. Within the house, windows clattered, and doors clapped, and the walls, though sufficiently substantial for a building of the kind, seemed to me to totter in the pest.

But still the heavy steps perambulating the apartment over my head, were distinctly heard amid the roar and fury of the elements. I thought more than once I even heard a groan; but I frankly own, placed in this unusual situation, my fancy may have misled me. I was tempted several times to call aloud, and ask whether the turbulence around us did not threaten danger to the building which we inhabited; but when I thought of the secluded and unsocial master of the dwelling, who seemed to avoid human society, and to remain undisturbed amid the elemental war, it seemed, that to speak to him at that moment, would have been to address the spirit of the tempest itself, since no other being, I thought, could have remained calm and tranquil while winds and waters were thus raging around.

In the process of time, fatigue prevailed over anxiety and curiosity. The storm abated, or my senses became deadened to its terrors, and I was asleep ere yet the mysterious paces of my host had ceased to echo on the flooring over my head.

It might have been expected that the novelty of my situation, although it did not prevent my slumbers, would have at least diminished

their profoundness, and shortened their duration. It proved otherwise, however; for I never slept more soundly in my life, and I awoke when, at morning dawn, my landlord shook me by the shoulder and dispelled some dream, of which, fortunately for you, I have no recollection, otherwise you would have been favoured with it, in hope you might have proved a second Daniel upon the occasion.

"You sleep sound—" said his full deep voice; "ere five years have rolled over your head, your slumbers will be lighter—unless ere then you are wrapped in the sleep which is never broken."

"How!" said I, starting up in the bed; "do you know anything of me—of my prospects—of my views in life?"

"Nothing," he answered, with a grim smile; "but it is evident you are entering upon the world young, inexperienced, and full of hope, and I do but prophesy to you what I would to any one in your condition.—But come; there lie your clothes—a brown crust and a draught of milk wait you, if you choose to break your fast; but you must make haste."

"I must first," I said, "take the freedom to spend a few minutes alone, before beginning the ordinary works of the day."

"Oh!—umph!—I cry your devotions pardon," he replied, and left the apartment.

Alan, there is something terrible about this man.

I joined him, as I had promised, in the kitchen where we had supped over night, where I found the articles which he had offered me for breakfast, without butter or any other addition.

He walked up and down while I partook of the bread and milk, and the slow measured weighty step seemed identified with the silence which I had heard last night. His pace, from its funereal slowness, seemed to keep time with some current of internal passion, dark, slow, and unchanged.—"We run and leap by the side of a lively and bubbling brook," thought I, internally, "as if we would run a race with it; but beside waters deep, slow, and lonely, our pace is slow and silent as their course. What thoughts may be now corresponding with that furrowed brow, and bearing time with that heavy step?"

"If you have finished," said he, looking up to me with a glance of impatience, as he observed that I ate no longer, but remained with my eyes fixed upon him, "I wait to show you the way."

We went out together, no individual of the family having been visible excepting my landlord. I was disappointed of the opportunity which I watched for of giving some gratuity to the domestics they seemed to be. As for offering any recompense to the master of the household, it seemed to me impossible to have attempted it.

What would I have given for a share of thy composure, thou wouldst have thrust half-a-crown into a man's hand whose necessities seemed to crave it, conscious that you did right in making the purchase, and not caring sixpence whether you hurt the feelings of the man whom you meant to serve! I saw thee once give a penny to a man with a long beard, who, from the dignity of his exterior, might have represented Solon. I had not thy courage, and therefore I made no tender to my mysterious host, although, notwithstanding his dispo-

ver utensils, all around the house bespoke narrow circumstances, t actual poverty.
e left the place together. But I hear thee murmur thy very new appropriate ejaculation, *Ohe, jam satis!*—The rest for another . Perhaps I may delay farther communication till I learn how favours are valued.

LETTER V.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

HAVE thy two last epistles, my dear Darsie, and expecting the l, have been in no hurry to answer them. Do not think my ce ought to be ascribed to my failing to take interest in them, truly, they excel (though the task was difficult) thy usual excel-. Since the moon-calf who earliest discovered the Pandemium of Milton in an expiring wood-fire—since the first ingenious in who blew bubbles out of soap and water, thou, my best of ds, hast the highest knack at making histories out of nothing. t thou to plant the bean in the nursery-tale, thou wouldst make so soon as it began to germinate, that the castle of the giant was t to elevate its battlements on the top of it. All that happens to gets a touch of the wonderful and the sublime from thy own imagination. Didst ever see what artists call a Claude Lorraine s, which spreads its own particular hue over the whole landscape h you see through it?—thou beholdest ordinary events just ough such a medium.

have looked carefully at the facts of thy last long letter, and they ust such as might have befallen any little truant of the High pool, who had got down to Leith Sands, gone beyond the *prawn*-wet his hose and shoon, and, finally, had been carried home, in passion, by some high-kilted fishwife, cursing all the while the ble which the brat occasioned her.

admire the figure which thou must have made, clinging for dear behind the old fellow's back—thy jaws chattering with fear, thy eles cramped with anxiety. Thy execrable supper of broiled on, which was enough to ensure the nightmare's regular visits t twelvemonth, may be termed a real affliction; but as for the a of Thursday last (such, I observe, was the date), it roared, tled, howled, and bellowed, as fearfully amongst the old chimney s in the Candle-maker-row, as it could on the Solway shore, for ery wind of it—*teste me per totam noctem vigilante*. And then e morning again, when—Lord help you—in your sentimental acy you bid the poor man adieu, without even tendering him a-crown for supper and lodging!

u laugh at me for giving a penny (to be accurate, though, thou dst have said sixpence) to an old fellow, whom thou, in thy high , wouldst have sent home supperless, because he was like Solon elisarius. But you forget that the affront descended like a

benediction into the pouch of the old gaberlunzie, who overflowed blessings upon the generous donor—Long ere he would have thanked thee, Darsie, for thy barren veneration of his beard and his beard. Then you laugh at my good father's retreat from Falkirk, just as it were not time for a man to trudge when three or four mountain knaves, with naked claymores, and heels as light as their fingers were scampering after him, crying *furinish*. You remember he said himself when the Laird of Bucklivat told him that *furinish* signified "stay a while." "What the devil," he said, surprised of his Presbyterian correctness by the unreasonableness of such request under the circumstances, "would the scoundrels have me stop to have my head cut off?"

Imagine such a train at your own heels, Darsie, and ask yourself whether you would not exert your legs as fast as you did in flying from the Solway tide. And yet you impeach my father's courage—tell you he has courage enough to do what is right, and to stop when what is wrong—courage enough to defend a righteous cause with hand and purse, and to take the part of the poor man against the oppressor, without fear of the consequences to himself. This is courage, Darsie; and it is of little consequence to most men in this age and country, whether they ever possess military courage or not.

Do not think I am angry with you, though I thus attempt to record your opinions on my father's account. I am well aware that, upon the whole, he is scarce regarded with more respect by me than by thee. And, while I am in a serious humour, which it is difficult to preserve with one who is perpetually tempting me to laugh at him, pray, dearest Darsie, let not thy ardour for adventure carry thee into more such scrapes as that of the Solway Sands. The rest of the story is a mere imagination; but that stormy evening may have proved, as the Clown says to Lear, "a naughty night to swim in."

As for the rest, if you can work mysterious and romantic heroism out of old cross-grained fishermen, why, I for one will reap some amusement by the metamorphosis. Yet hold! even there, there is some need of caution. This same female chaplain—thou sayest little of her, and so much of every one else, that it excites some suspicion in my mind. *Very pretty* she is, it seems—and that is all thy discretion informs me of. There are cases in which silence implies more things than consent. Wert thou ashamed or afraid, Darsie, to boast thyself with the praises of the very pretty grace-sayer?—As I thou blushest! Why, do I not know thee an inveterate Squint-eyed Dames? and have I not been in thy confidence? An elegant elegance displayed when the rest of the figure was muffled in a cardinal, a neat well-turned ankle and instep, seen by chance as its owner tripped up the Old Assembly Close,¹ turned thy brain for eight days. Wert thou once caught, if I remember rightly, with a single glance at a single matchless eye, which, when the fair owner withdrew her head, proved to be single in the literal sense of the word. And, besides, were you not another time enamoured of a voice—a mere voice,

¹ Of old this almost deserted alley formed the most common access betwixt the High Street and the southern suburbs.

gled in the psalmody at the Old Greyfriars' Church—until you overed the proprietor of that dulcet organ to be Miss Dolly Macard, who is both “back and breast,” as our saying goes?

All these things considered, and contrasted with thy artful silence the subject of this grace-saying Nereid of thine, I must beg thee more explicit upon that subject in thy next, unless thou wouldst let me form the conclusion that thou thinkest more of her than I carest to talk of.

You will not expect much news from this quarter, as you know the monotony of my life, and are aware it must at present be devoted to interrupted study. You have said a thousand times, that I am not qualified to make my way by dint of plodding, and therefore plod I must.

My father seems to be more impatient of your absence than he was at your first departure. He is sensible, I believe, that our solitary souls want the light which your gay humour was wont to throw over us, and feels melancholy as men do when the light of the sun is longer upon the landscape. If it is thus with him, thou mayest imagine it is much more so with me, and canst conceive how heartily I wish that thy frolic were ended, and thou once more our inmate.

I resume my pen, after a few hours' interval, to say that an incident has occurred, on which you will yourself be building a hundred tales in the air, and which even I, jealous as I am of such baseless fancies, cannot but own affords ground for singular conjecture.

My father has of late taken me frequently along with him when he visits the Courts, in his anxiety to see me properly initiated into practical forms of business. I own I feel something on his account and my own from this over-anxiety, which, I daresay, renders both ridiculous. But what signifies my repugnance? my father urges me up to his counsel learned in the law,—“Are you quite ready to come on to-day, Mr Crossbite?—This is my son, designed for the law.—I take the liberty to bring him with me to-day to the consultation, merely that he may see how these things are managed.”

Mr Crossbite smiles and bows, as a lawyer smiles on the solicitor who employs him, and I daresay, thrusts his tongue into his cheek, and whispers into the first great wig that passes him, “What the d—n old Fairford mean by letting loose his whelp on me?”

As I stood beside them, too much vexed at the childish part I was obliged to play to derive much information from the valuable arguments of Mr Crossbite, I observed a rather elderly man, who stood with his eyes firmly bent on my father, as if he only waited an end to the business in which he was engaged, to address him. There was something, I thought, in the gentleman's appearance which demanded attention.—Yet his dress was not in the present taste, though it had once been magnificent, was now antiquated and unfashionable. His coat was of branched velvet, with a satin lining, a justicoat of violet-coloured silk, much embroidered; his breeches of the same stuff as the coat. He wore square-toed shoes, with fore-

tops, as they are called; and his silk stockings were rolled up over his knee, as you may have seen in pictures, and here and there some of those originals who seem to pique themselves on dressing after the mode of Methuselah. A *chapeau bras* and sword necessarily completed his equipment, which, though out of date, showed that it belonged to a man of distinction.

The instant Mr Crossbite had ended what he had to say, the gentleman walked up to my father, with, "Your servant, Mr Fairford—it is long since you and I met."

My father, whose politeness, you know, is exact and formal, bowed and hemmed, and was confused, and at length professed that the distance since they had met was so great, that though he remembered the face perfectly, the name, he was sorry to say, had—really—somehow—escaped his memory.

"Have you forgot Herries of Birrenswork?" said the gentleman, and my father bowed even more profoundly than before; though I think his reception of his old friend seemed to lose some of the respectful civility which he bestowed on him while his name was unknown. It now seemed to be something like the lip-courtesy which the heart would have denied had ceremony permitted.

My father, however, again bowed low, and hoped he saw him well.

"So well, my good Mr Fairford, that I come hither determined to renew my acquaintance with one or two old friends, and with you in the first place. I halt at my old resting-place—you must dine with me to-day at Paterson's, at the head of the Horse Wynd—it is near your new fashionable dwelling, and I have business with you."

My father excused himself respectfully, and not without embarrassment—"he was particularly engaged at home."

"Then I will dine with you, man," said Mr Herries of Birrenswork; "the few minutes you can spare me after dinner will suffice for my business; and I will not prevent you a moment from mind your own—I am no bottle-man."

You have often remarked that my father, though a scrupulous observer of the rites of hospitality, seems to exercise them rather as a duty than as a pleasure; indeed, but for a conscientious wish to feed the hungry and receive the stranger, his doors would open to guests much seldomer than is the case. I never saw so strong an example of this peculiarity (which I should otherwise have said caricatured in your description), as in his mode of homologating a self-given invitation of Mr Herries. The embarrassed brow, the attempt at a smile which accompanied his "We will expect your honour of seeing you in Brown Square at three o'clock," could deceive any one, and did not impose upon the old Laird. It was with a look of scorn he replied, "I will relieve you then till the hour, Mr Fairford;" and his whole manner seemed to say, "It is my pleasure to dine with you, and I care not whether I am wanted or no."

When he turned away, I asked my father who he was.

"An unfortunate gentleman," was the reply.

"He looks pretty well on his misfortunes," replied I. "I should not have suspected that so gay an outside was lacking a dinner."

"Who told you that he does?" replied my father; "he is *omniscione major*, so far as worldly circumstances are concerned—It be hoped he makes a good use of them; though, if he does, it be for the first time in his life."

"He has then been an irregular liver?" insinuated I.

My father replied by that famous brocard with which he silences unacceptable queries, turning in the slightest degree upon the backs of our neighbours,—“If we mend our own faults, Alan, we have all of us have enough to do, without sitting in judgment upon other folks.”

As I was again at fault; but rallying once more, I observed, he had the air of a man of high rank and family.

"He is well entitled," said my father, "representing Herries of Birrenswork; a branch of that great and once powerful family of Herries, the elder branch whereof merged in the house of Nithesdale at the death of Lord Robin the Philosopher, Anno Domini sixteen hundred and sixty-seven."

"As he still," said I, "his patrimonial estate of Birrenswork?"

"No," replied my father; "so far back as his father's time, it was a designation—the property being forfeited by Herbert Herries, being his kinsman, the Earl of Derwentwater, to the Preston family in 1715. But they keep up the designation, thinking, doubtless, that their claims may be revived in more favourable times for Catholics and for Popery; and folks who in no way partake of their Catholic capriccios, do yet allow it to pass unchallenged, *ex comitate, ex misericordia*.—But were he the Pope and the Pretender, we must get some dinner ready for him, since he has thought fit to offer himself. So hasten home, my lad, and tell Hannah, Cook, and James Wilkinson, to do their best; and do thou look out for two of Maxwell's best—it is in the fifth bin—there are the best of the wine-cellar.—Do not leave them in the lock—you know James's failing, though he is an honest creature under all other considerations—and I have but two bottles of the old brandy left—we must keep it for medicine, Alan."

So I went I—made my preparations—the hour of dinner came, and so did Mr Herries of Birrenswork.

Had thy power of imagination and description, Darsie, I could have painted out a fine, dark, mysterious, Rembrandt-looking portrait of some stranger, which should be as far superior to thy fisherman, as the strength of chain-mail is to a herring-net. I can assure you there was no matter for description about him; but knowing my own infirmities, I can only say, I thought him eminently disagreeable ill-bred.—No, *ill-bred* is not the proper word; on the contrary, he appeared to know the rules of good-breeding perfectly, and only took that the rank of the company did not require that he should do more to them—a view of the matter infinitely more offensive than his behaviour had been that of uneducated and proper rudeness. When my father said grace, the Laird did all but whistle aloud; and I, at my father's desire, returned thanks, he used his toothpick, which he had waited that moment for its exercise.

As much for Kirk—with King, matters went even worse. My

father, thou knowest, is particularly full of deference to his guests, and in the present case, he seemed more than usually desirous to escape every cause of dispute. He so far compromised his loyalty as to announce merely "The King," as his first toast after dinner, instead of the emphatic "King George," which is his usual form. Our guest made a motion with his glass, so as to pass it over the water-decanter which stood beside him, and added, "Over to the water."

My father coloured, but would not seem to hear this. Much more there was of careless and disrespectful, in the stranger's manner and tone of conversation; so that though I know my father's prejudice in favour of rank and birth, and though I am aware his other masculine understanding has never entirely shaken off the slavish awe of the great, which in his earlier days they had so many means of commanding, still I could hardly excuse him for enduring so much insolence—such it seemed to be—as this self-invited guest was posed to offer to him at his own table.

One can endure a traveller in the same carriage, if he treads on your toes by accident, or even through negligence; but it is quite different when, knowing that they are rather of a tender description, he continues to pound away at them with his hoofs. In my opinion—and I am a man of peace—you can, in that case, hardly avoid a declaration of war.

I believe my father read my thoughts in my eye; for, pulling out his watch, he said, "Half past four, Alan—you should be in your room by this time—Birrenswork will excuse you."

Our visitor nodded carelessly, and I had no longer any pretence to remain. But as I left the room I heard this Magnate of Nithsdale distinctly mention the name of Latimer. I lingered; but at length a direct hint from my father obliged me to withdraw; and when an hour afterwards, I was summoned to partake of a cup of tea, the guest had departed. He had business that evening in the London Street, and could not spare time even to drink tea. I could hardly help saying, I considered his departure as a relief from incivility. "What business has he to upbraid us," I said, "with the change of our dwelling from a more inconvenient to a better quarter of the town? What was it to him if we chose to imitate some of the conveniences or luxuries of an English dwelling-house, instead of being piled up above each other in flats? Have his patrician birth and aristocratic fortunes given him any right to censure those who discontinue the fruits of their own industry according to their own pleasure?"

My father took a long pinch of snuff, and replied, "Very well, Alan; very well indeed. I wish Mr Crossbite or Counsellor had heard you; they must have acknowledged that you have a talent for forensic elocution; and it may not be amiss to try a little declamation at home now and then, to gather audacity and keep the self in breath. But touching the subject of this paraffic of water, it's not worth a pinch of tobacco. D'ye think that I care for the Herries of Birrenswork more than any other gentleman who comes here about business, although I do not care to go tilting at his tail because he speaks like a grey goose, as he is? But to say no

him, I want to have Darsie Latimer's present direction; for it is possible I may have to write the lad a line with my own hand—but I do not well know—but give me the direction at all events.” And so, and if you have heard from my father accordingly, you know more, probably, about the subject of this letter than I who write it. But if you have not, then shall I have discharged a friend's duty in letting you know that there certainly is something afloat between this disagreeable Laird and my father, in which you are considerably interested.

Well! and although I have given thee a subject for waking thoughts, beware of building a castle too heavy for the foundation; in the present instance, is barely the word Latimer occurring in conversation betwixt a gentleman of Dumfriesshire and a W.S. of Edinburgh—*Cætera prorsus ignoro*.

LETTER VI.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

[In continuation of Letters III. and IV.]

OLD thee I walked out into the open air with my grave and stern guard. I could now see more perfectly than on the preceding day the secluded glen in which stood the two or three cottages which appeared to be the abode of him and his family.

The dell was so narrow, in proportion to its depth, that no ray of the morning sun was likely to reach it till it should rise high in the horizon. Looking up the dell, you saw a brawling brook issuing in great haste from a covert of underwood, like a race-horse impatient to arrive at the goal; and, if you gazed yet more earnestly, you could observe part of a high waterfall glimmering through the foliage, and giving occasion, doubtless, to the precipitate speed of the stream. Lower down, the stream became more placid, and opened into a quiet piece of water, which afforded a rude haven to two or three men's boats, then lying high and dry on the sand, the tide being out. Two or three miserable huts could be seen beside this little lake, inhabited probably by the owners of the boats, but inferior in every respect to the establishment of mine host, though that was comfortable enough.

I had but a minute or two to make these observations, yet during that space my companion showed symptoms of impatience, and more than once shouted, “Cristal—Cristal Nixon,” until the old man of the mill evening appeared at the door of one of the neighbouring cottages or outhouses, leading the strong black horse which I before mentioned, ready bridled and saddled. My conductor made a sign with his finger, and, turning from the cottage door, he went the way up the steep path or ravine which connected the secluded dell with the open country.

Had I been perfectly aware of the character of the road which I had been hurried with so much impetuosity on the preceding evening, I greatly question if I should have ventured the descent for it deserved no better name than the channel of a torrent, not a good measure filled with water, that dashed in foam and fury to the dell, being swelled with the rains of the preceding night. I ascended this ugly path with some difficulty, although on foot, and felt dizzy when I observed, from such traces as the rains had obliterated, that the horse seemed almost to have slid down it on his haunches the evening before.

My host threw himself on his horse's back, without placing a foot in the stirrup—passed me in the perilous ascent, against which he pressed his steed as if the animal had had the footing of a wild horse. The water and mud splashed from his heels in his reckless career, and a few bounds placed him on the top of the bank, where I presently joined him, and found the horse and rider standing still as statue; the former panting and expanding his broad nostrils to the morning wind, the latter motionless, with his eye fixed on the beams of the rising sun, which already began to peer above the eastern horizon, and gild the distant mountains of Cumberland and Liddesdale.

He seemed in a reverie, from which he started at my approach, and, putting his horse in motion, led the way, at a leisurely pace, through a broken and sandy road, which traversed a waste, level, and uncultivated track of downs, intermixed with morass, much like that in the neighbourhood of my quarters at Shepherd's Bush. Indeed, the whole open ground of this district, where it approaches the sea, has, except in a few favoured spots, the same uniform and dreary character.

Advancing about a hundred yards from the brink of the glen, we gained a still more extensive command of this desolate prospect, which seemed even more dreary, as contrasted with the opposite shores of Cumberland, crossed and intersected by ten thousand lines of trees growing in hedge-rows, shaded with groves and woodlands of considerable extent, animated by hamlets and villas, from which clouds of smoke already gave sign of human life and human industry.

My conductor had extended his arm, and was pointing the road towards Shepherd's Bush, when the step of a horse was heard approaching us. He looked sharply round, and having observed who was approaching, proceeded in his instructions to me, planting himself at the same time in the very middle of the path, which, at the place where we halted, had a slough on the one side, and a sandbank on the other.

I observed that the rider who approached us slackened his horse's pace from a slow trot to a walk, as if desirous to suffer us to proceed, or at least to avoid passing us at a spot where the difficulty of descent so must have brought us very close to each other. You know the old failing, Alan, and that I am always willing to attend to anything in preference to the individual who has for the time possession of the conversation.

Agreeably to this amiable propensity, I was internally speculating

ning the cause of the rider keeping aloof from us, when my
 union, elevating his deep voice so suddenly and so sternly, as
 to recall my wandering thoughts, exclaimed, "In the name
 devil, young man, do you think that others have no better use
 their time than you have, that you oblige me to repeat the same
 to you three times over?—Do you see, I say, yonder thing at
 's distance, that looks like a finger-post, or rather like a gal-
 —I would it had a dreaming fool hanging upon it, as an ex-
 to all meditative moon calves!—Yon gibbet-looking pole will
 you to the bridge, where you must pass the large brook; then
 ed straight forwards, till several roads divide at a cairn.—
 ne on thee, thou art wandering again!"

is indeed quite true, that at this moment the horseman ap-
 hed us, and my attention was again called to him as I made
 to let him pass. His whole exterior at once showed that he be-
 d to the Society of Friends, or, as the world and the world's law
 hem, Quakers. A strong and useful iron-grey galloway showed,
 sleek and good condition, that the merciful man was merciful
 beast. His accoutrements were in the usual unostentatious,
 lean and serviceable order, which characterises these sectaries.
 ng surtout of dark-grey superfine cloth descended down to the
 e of his leg, and was buttoned up to his chin, to defend him
 st the morning air. As usual, his ample beaver hung down
 ut button or loop, and shaded a comely and placid countenance,
 ravity of which appeared to contain some seasoning of humour,
 and nothing in common with the pinched puritanical air affected
 votees in general. The brow was open and free from wrinkles,
 er of age or hypocrisy. The eye was clear, calm, and con-
 te, yet appeared to be disturbed by apprehension, not to say
 as, pronouncing the usual salutation of, "I wish thee a good
 w, friend," he indicated, by turning his palfrey close to one
 f the path, a wish to glide past us with as little trouble as pos-
 —just as a traveller would choose to pass a mastiff of whose
 able intentions he is by no means confident.

my friend, not meaning, perhaps, that he should get off so
 put his horse quite across the path, so that, without plunging
 he slough, or scrambling up the bank, the Quaker could not
 passed him. Neither of these was an experiment without
 l greater than the passenger seemed willing to incur. He
 , therefore, as if waiting till my companion should make way
 n; and, as they sat fronting each other, I could not help think-
 at they might have formed no bad emblem of Peace and War;
 though my conductor was unarmed, yet the whole of his man-
 's stern look, and his upright seat on horseback, were entirely
 of a soldier in undress. He accosted the Quaker in these
 —"So ho! friend Joshua—thou art early to the road this
 ng. Has the spirit moved thee and thy righteous brethren to
 h some honesty, and pull down yonder tide-nets that keep the
 om coming up the river?"

rely, friend, not so," answered Joshua, firmly but good-hum-
 y at the same time; "thou canst not expect that our own

hands should pull down what our purses established. Thou kill the fish with spear, line, and coble-net; and we, with snares and with nets, which work by the ebb and the flow of the tide. Each do what seems best in his eyes to secure a share of the blessing which Providence hath bestowed on the river, and that within his own bounds. I prithee seek no quarrel against us, for thou shalt have wrong at our hand."

"Be assured I will take none at the hand of any man, whether hat be cocked or broad-brimmed," answered the fisherman. "I give you in fair terms, Joshua Geddes, that you and your partners, using unlawful craft to destroy the fish in the Solway by stake-net and wears; and that we, who fish fairly, and like men, as our fathers did, have daily and yearly less sport and less profit. Do not think gravity or hypocrisy can carry it off as you have done. The world knows you, and we know you. You will destroy the salmon which makes the livelihood of fifty poor families, and then wipe your mouth and go to make a speech at Meeting. But do not hope it will avail thus. I give you fair warning, we will be upon you one morning soon, when we will not leave a stake standing in the pools of Solway; and down the tide they shall every one go, and well if we do not send a lessee along with them."

"Friend," replied Joshua, with a constrained smile, "but thou know thou dost not mean as thou say'st, I would tell thee we are under the protection of this country's laws; nor do we the less try to obtain their protection, that our principles permit us not, by the act of violent resistance, to protect ourselves."

"All villanous cant and cowardice," exclaimed the fisherman, "and assumed merely as a cloak to your hypocritical avarice."

"Nay, say not cowardice, my friend," answered the Quaker, "since thou knowest there may be as much courage in enduring wrong as in acting; and I will be judged by this youth, or by any one else, whether there is not more cowardice—even in the opinion of the world whose thoughts are the breath in thy nostrils—in the arm of the oppressor who doth injury, than in the defenceless and patient sufferer, who endureth it with constancy."

"I will change no more words with you on the subject," said the fisherman, who, as if something moved at the last argument which Mr Geddes had used, now made room for him to pass forward on his journey.—"Do not forget, however," he added, "that you had fair warning, nor suppose that we will accept of fair warning as an apology for foul play. These nets of yours are unlawful—they are our fishings—we will have them down at all risks and hazards. I am a man of my word, friend Joshua."

"I trust thou art," said the Quaker; "but thou art the more bound to be cautious in rashly affirming what thou wilt never retract. For I tell thee, friend, that though there is as great a difference between thee and one of our people, as there is between a dog and a sheep, yet I know and believe thou hast so much of the lion in thee, that thou wouldst scarce employ thy strength and thy power upon that which professeth no means of resistance. Report saith much good of thee, at least, if it says little more."

"Time will try," answered the fisherman; "and hark thee, Joshua, ere we part I will put thee in the way of doing one good deed, which, credit me, is better than twenty moral speeches. Here is a stranger youth, whom Heaven has so scantily gifted with brains, that he will bewilder himself in the Sands, as he did last night, unless thou wilt kindly show him the way to Shepherd's Bush; for I have been in vain endeavouring to make him comprehend the road thither. Hast thou so much charity under thy simplicity, Quaker, as to do me a good turn?"

"Nay, it is thou, friend," answered Joshua, "that dost lack charity, to suppose any one unwilling to do so simple a kindness."

"Thou art right—I should have remembered it can cost thee nothing.—Young gentleman, this pious pattern of primitive simplicity will teach thee the right way to the Shepherd's Bush—ay, and I will himself shear thee like a sheep, if you come to buying and selling with him."

He then abruptly asked me how long I intended to remain at Shepherd's Bush.

I replied, I was at present uncertain—as long, probably, as I could use myself in the neighbourhood.

"You are fond of sport?" he added, in the same tone of brief inquiry.

I answered in the affirmative, but added, I was totally inexperienced.

"Perhaps if you reside here for some days," he said, "we may meet again, and I may have the chance of giving you a lesson."

Ere I could express either thanks or assent, he turned short round with a wave of his hand, by way of adieu, and rode back to the verge of the dell from which we had emerged together; and as he remained standing upon the banks, I could long hear his voice while he shouted to those within its recesses.

Meanwhile the Quaker and I proceeded on our journey for some time in silence; he restraining his soberminded steed to a pace which might have suited a much less active walker than myself, and looking on me from time to time with an expression of curiosity, tempered with benignity. For my part, I cared not to speak first. It seemed I had never before been in company with one of this particular sect, and, afraid that in addressing him I might unwittingly stir up upon some of their prejudices or peculiarities, I patiently remained silent. At length he asked me whether I had been long in the service of the Laird, as men called him.

I repeated the words "in his service," with such an accent of surprise, as induced him to say, "Nay, but, friend, I mean no offence; perhaps I should have said in his society—an inmate, I mean, in his house?"

"I am totally unknown to the person from whom we have just parted," said I, "and our connection is only temporary—He had the courtesy to give me his guidance from the Sands, and a night's harbourage from the tempest. So our acquaintance began, and there is no likelihood of end; for you may observe that our friend is by no means apt to encourage familiarity."

"So little so," answered my companion, "that thy case is, I think the first in which I ever heard of his receiving any one into his house; that is, if thou hast really spent the night there."

"Why should you doubt it?" replied I; "there is no motive I can have to deceive you, nor is the object worth it."

"Be not angry with me," said the Quaker; "but thou knowest that thine own people do not, as we humbly endeavour to do, confine themselves within the simplicity of truth, but employ the language of falsehood, not only for profit, but for compliment, and sometimes for mere diversion. I have heard various stories of my neighbours, most of which I only believe a small part, and even then they are difficult to reconcile with each other. But this being the first time I ever heard of his receiving a stranger within his dwelling, may I express some doubts. I pray thee let them not offend thee."

"He does not," said I, "appear to possess in much abundance the means of exercising hospitality, and so may be excused from offering it in ordinary cases."

"That is to say, friend," replied Joshua, "thou hast supped and perhaps breakfasted worse. Now my small tenement, called Mount Sharon, is nearer to us by two miles than thine inn; and although going thither may prolong thy walk, as taking thee off the straighter road to Shepherd's Bush, yet methinks exercise will strengthen thy youthful limbs, as well as a good plain meal thy youthful appetite. What say'st thou, my young acquaintance?"

"If it puts you not to inconvenience," I replied; for the invitation was cordially given, and my bread and milk had been hastily swallowed, and in small quantity.

"Nay," said Joshua, "use not the language of compliment with those who renounce it. Had this poor courtesy been very inconvenient, perhaps I had not offered it."

"I accept the invitation, then," said I, "in the same good spirit with which you give it."

The Quaker smiled, reached me his hand, I shook it, and we travelled on in great cordiality with each other. The fact is, I was much entertained by contrasting in my own mind the open manner of the kindhearted Joshua Geddes, with the abrupt, dark, and low demeanour of my entertainer on the preceding evening. Both were blunt and unceremonious; but the plainness of the Quaker had the character of devotional simplicity, and was mingled with the most real kindness, as if honest Joshua was desirous of atoning, by sincerity, for the lack of external courtesy. On the contrary, the manners of the fisherman were those of one to whom the rules of good behaviour might be familiar, but who, either from pride or misanthropy, scorned to observe them. Still I thought of him with interest and curiosity, notwithstanding so much about him that was repulsive; and I promised myself, in the course of my conversation with the Quaker, to learn all that he knew on the subject. He turned the conversation, however, into a different channel, and inquired into my own condition of life, and views in visiting the remote frontier.

I only thought it necessary to mention my name, and add, that

I been educated to the law, but finding myself possessed of some independence, I had of late permitted myself some relaxation, and was residing at Shepherd's Bush to enjoy the pleasure of angling.

"I do thee no harm, young man," said my new friend, "in wishing thee a better employment for thy grave hours, and a more humane amusement (if amusement thou must have) for those of a lighter character."

"You are severe, sir," I replied. "I heard you but a moment ago refer yourself to the protection of the laws of the country—if there be laws, there must be lawyers to explain, and judges to administer them."

Joshua smiled, and pointed to the sheep which were grazing on the downs over which we were travelling,—“Were I a wolf,” he said, “I could come even now upon yonder flocks, they would crowd for protection, doubtless, around the shepherd and his dogs; yet they are often and harassed daily by the one, shorn, and finally killed and eaten by the other. But I say not this to shock you; for, though judges and lawyers are evils, yet they are necessary evils in this provisional state of society, till man shall learn to render unto his neighbour that which is their due, according to the light of his own conscience, and through no other compulsion. Meanwhile, I have known many righteous men who have followed thy intended profession in honesty and uprightness of walk. The greater their merit, the more walk erect in a path which so many find slippery.”

“And angling,” said I,—“you object to that also as an amusement, when, who, if I understood rightly what passed between you and my landlord, are yourself a proprietor of fisheries.”

“Not a proprietor,” he replied, “I am only, in copartnership with others, a tacksman or lessee of some valuable salmon fisheries a little way in the coast. But mistake me not. The evil of angling, which I class all sports, as they are called, which have the sufferings of animals for their end and object, does not consist in the mere catching and killing those animals with which the bounty of Providence hath stocked the earth for the good of man, but in making of a protracted agony a principle of delight and enjoyment. I do not see how these fisheries can be conducted for the necessary taking, catching, and selling the fish; and, in the same way, were I a farmer, I could send my lambs to market. But I should as soon think of deriving myself a sport and amusement out of the trade of the butcher as out of that of the fisher.”

He argued the point no farther; for though I thought his arguments a little too high-strained, yet as my mind acquitted me of having taken delight in aught but the theory of field-sports, I did not think myself called upon stubbornly to advocate a practice which afforded me so little pleasure.

We had by this time arrived at the remains of an old finger-post, which my host had formerly pointed out as a landmark. Here, a rustic wooden bridge, supported by long posts resembling crutches, led me to get across the water, while my new friend sought a ford a good way higher up, for the stream was considerably swelled.

I paused for his rejoining me, I observed an angler at a little

distance pouching trout after trout, as fast almost as he could catch his line; and I own, in spite of Joshua's lecture on humanity, I could not but envy his adroitness and success,—so natural is the love of sport to our minds, or so easily are we taught to assimilate success in field-sports with ideas of pleasure, and with the praise due to address and agility. I soon recognised in the successful angler little Benjie, who had been my guide and tutor in that gentle art, as you have learned from my former letters. I called—I whistled—the rascal recognised me, and, starting like a guilty thing, seemed hesitating whether to approach or to run away; and when he determined on the former, it was to assail me with a loud, clamorous, and exaggerated report of the anxiety of all at the Shepherd's Bush for my personal safety; how my landlady had wept, how Sam and the ostler had not the heart to go to bed, but sat up all night drinking—and how he himself had been up long before daybreak to go in quest of me.

"And you were switching the water, I suppose," said I, "to discover my dead body?"

"This observation produced a long "Na—a—a" of acknowledgment; but, with his natural impudence, and confidence in my good-nature, he immediately added, "that he thought I would like some fresh trout or twa for breakfast, and the water being in such a rattling trim for the saumon raun,¹ he couldna help taking a cast."

While we were engaged in this discussion, the honest Quaker returned to the farther end of the wooden bridge to tell me he could not venture to cross the brook in its present state, but would be obliged under the necessity to ride round by the stone bridge, which was half a mile and a half higher up than his own house. He was about to give me directions how to proceed without him, and inquire for my sister, when I suggested to him, that if he pleased to trust his horse to little Benjie, the boy might carry him round by the bridge, which we walked the shorter and more pleasant road.

Joshua shook his head, for he was well acquainted with Benjie, who, he said, was the naughtiest varlet in the whole neighbourhood. Nevertheless, rather than part company, he agreed to put the pony under his charge for a short season, with many injunctions that he should not attempt to mount, but lead the pony (even Solomon) by the bridle, under the assurances of sixpence in case of proper demeanour, and penalty that if he transgressed the orders given him, "verily he should be scourged."

Promises cost Benjie nothing, and he showered them out wholesale; till the Quaker at length yielded up the bridle to him, repeating his charges, and enforcing them by holding up his forefinger. On my part, I called to Benjie to leave the fish he had taken at Mount Sharon, making, at the same time, an apologetic countenance to my new friend, not being quite aware whether the compliment would be agreeable to such a condemner of field-sports.

He understood me at once, and reminded me of the practical d

¹ The bait made of salmon-roes salted and preserved. In a swollen river, and about the month of October, it is a most deadly bait.

tion betwixt catching the animals as an object of cruel and wanton sport, and eating them as lawful and gratifying articles of food, or they were killed. On the latter point he had no scruples; on the contrary, assured me, that this brook contained the real trout, so highly esteemed by all connoisseurs, and that, when taken within an hour of their being caught, they had a peculiar firmness of substance and delicacy of flavour, which rendered them an agreeable addition to a morning meal, especially when earned, like mine, by early rising, and an hour or two's wholesome exercise. But to thy alarm be it spoken, Alan, we did not come so far as the taking of our fish without farther adventure. So it is only to spare thy patience, and mine own eyes, that I pull up for the present, and leave thee the rest of my story in a subsequent letter.

LETTER VII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

[In continuation.]

ITTLE BENJIE, with the pony, having been sent off on the left side of the brook, the Quaker and I sauntered on, like the cavalry and infantry of the same army occupying the opposite banks of a river, observing the same line of march. But, while my worthy companion was assuring me of a pleasant greensward walk to his manly little Benjie, who had been charged to keep in sight, chose to straggle from the path assigned him, and, turning to the right, led his charge, Solomon, out of our vision.

"The villain means to mount him!" cried Joshua, with more vivacity than was consistent with his profession of passive endurance.

I endeavoured to appease his apprehensions, as he pushed on, wiping his brow with vexation, assuring him, that if the boy did mount, it would be for his own sake, ride gently.

"You do not know him," said Joshua, rejecting all consolation; "nothing gently!—no, he will gallop Solomon—he will mislead the sober patience of the poor animal who has borne me so long! I was given over to my own devices when I ever let him touch the saddle, for such a little miscreant there never was before him in this country."

He then proceeded to expatiate on every sort of rustic enormity which he accused Benjie. He had been suspected of snaring partridges—was detected by Joshua himself in liming singing-birds—was fully charged with having worried several cats, by aid of a rascal which attended him, and which was as lean, and ragged, and treacherous, as his master. Finally, Benjie stood accused of having decoyed a duck, to hunt it with the said lurcher, which was as dexterous in water as on land. I chimed in with my friend, in order to give him farther irritation, and declared, I should be dis-

posed, from my own experience, to give up Benjie as one of Satan's imps. Joshua Geddes began to censure the phrase as too much exaggerated, and otherwise unbecoming the mouth of a reflecting person; and, just as I was apologising for it, as being a term of common parlance, we heard certain sounds on the opposite side of the brook, which seemed to indicate that Solomon and Benjie were issuing together. The sand-hills behind which Benjie seemed to take his course, had concealed from us, as doubtless he meant they should, his ascent into the forbidden saddle, and, putting Solomon to his mettle, which he was seldom called upon to exert, they had cantered away together in great amity, till they came near to the ford from which the palfrey's legitimate owner had already turned back.

Here a contest of opinions took place between the horse and his rider. The latter, according to his instructions, attempted to direct Solomon towards the distant bridge of stone; but Solomon opin'd that the ford was the shortest way to his own stable. The point was sharply contested, and we heard Benjie gee-hupping, tchek-tcheking, and, above all, flogging in great style; while Solomon, who, docile in his general habits, was now stirred beyond his patience, made great trampling and recalcitration; and it was their joint noise which we heard, without being able to see, though Joshua might have well guess, the cause of it.

Alarmed at these indications, the Quaker began to shout out, "Benjie—thou varlet!—Solomon—thou fool!" when the couple presented themselves in full drive, Solomon having now decidedly obtained the better of the conflict, and bringing his unwilling rider on his high career down to the ford. Never was there anger changed so fast into humane fear, as that of my good companion. "The varlet will be drowned!" he exclaimed—"a widow's son!—her only son and drowned!—let me go——" And he struggled with me stoically as I hung upon him, to prevent him from plunging into the ford.

I had no fear whatever for Benjie; for the blackguard vermin, though he could not manage the refractory horse, stuck on his back like a monkey. Solomon and Benjie scrambled through the ford with little inconvenience, and resumed their gallop on the other side.

It was impossible to guess whether on this last occasion Benjie was running off with Solomon, or Solomon with Benjie; but, judging from character and motives, I rather suspected the former. I could not help laughing as the rascal passed me, grinning betwixt terror and delight, perched on the very pommel of the saddle, and holding with extended arms by bridle and mane; while Solomon, the palfrey, secured between his teeth, and his head hored down betwixt his fore legs, passed his master in this unwonted guise as hard as he could be pelt.

"The mischievous bastard!" exclaimed the Quaker, terrified at the loss of his usual moderation of speech—"the doomed gallows-bird!—he will break Solomon's wind to a certainty."

I prayed him to be comforted—assured him a brushing gallop would do his favourite no harm—and reminded him of the certainty he had bestowed on me a minute before, for applying a harsh epithet to the boy.

But Joshua was not without his answer;—"Friend youth," he said, "thou didst speak of the lad's soul, which thou didst affirm belonged to the enemy, and of that thou couldst say nothing of thine own knowledge; on the contrary, I did but speak of his outward man, which will assuredly be suspended by a cord, if he mendeth not his manners. Men say that, young as he is, he is one of the Laird's gang."

"Of the Laird's gang!" said I, repeating the words in surprise—"do you mean the person with whom I slept last night?—I heard him call him the Laird—is he at the head of a gang?"

"Nay, I meant not precisely a gang," said the Quaker, who appeared in his haste to have spoken more than he intended—"a company, or party, I should have said; but thus it is, friend Latimer, even the wisest men, when they permit themselves to be perturbed by passion, and speak as in a fever, or as with the tongue of the foolish and the forward. And although thou hast been hasty to remark my infirmity, yet I grieve not that thou hast been a witness to seeing that the stumbles of the wise may be no less a caution to youth and inexperience, than is the fall of the foolish."

This was a sort of acknowledgment of what I had already begun to suspect—that my new friend's real goodness of disposition, joined to the acquired quietism of his religious sect, had been unable entirely to check the effervescence of a temper naturally warm and hasty.

Upon the present occasion, as if sensible he had displayed a greater degree of emotion than became his character, Joshua avoided farther allusion to Benjie and Solomon, and proceeded to solicit my attention to the natural objects around us, which increased in beauty and interest, as, still conducted by the meanders of the brook, we left the common behind us, and entered a more cultivated and enclosed country, where arable and pasture ground was agreeably varied by groves and hedges. Descending now almost close to the stream, our course lay through a little gate, into a pathway, kept with great neatness, the sides of which were decorated with trees and flowering shrubs of the hardier species; until, ascending by a gentle slope, we issued from the grove, and stood almost at once in front of a low but very neat building, of an irregular form; and my guide, shaking me cordially by the hand, made me welcome to Mount Sharon.

The wood through which we had approached this little mansion was grown around it both on the north and north-west, but, breaking off in different directions, was intersected by a few fields well watered and sheltered. The house fronted to the south-east, and from thence a pleasure-ground, or, I should rather say, the gardens, sloped down to the water. I afterwards understood that the father of the present proprietor had a considerable taste for horticulture, which had been inherited by his son, and had formed these gardens, which, with their shaven turf, pleached alleys, wildernesses, and exotic trees and shrubs, greatly excelled anything of the kind which had been attempted in the neighbourhood.

If there was a little vanity in the complacent smile with which Joshua Geddes saw me gaze with delight on a scene so different from the naked waste we had that day traversed in company, it might

surely be permitted to one, who, cultivating and improving the beauty of nature, had found therein, as he said, bodily health, and a pleasant relaxation for the mind. At the bottom of the extended gardens a brook wheeled round in a wide semi-circle, and was itself the boundary. The opposite side was no part of Joshua's domain, the brook was there skirted by a precipitous rock of limestone, which seemed a barrier of Nature's own erecting around his little Eden of beauty, comfort, and peace.

"But I must not let thee forget," said the kind Quaker, "and thy admiration of these beauties of our little inheritance, that breakfast has been a light one."

So saying, Joshua conducted me to a small sashed door, open under a porch amply mantled by honeysuckle and clematis, into a parlour of moderate size; the furniture of which, in plainness and excessive cleanliness, bore the characteristic marks of the sect to which the owner belonged.

Thy father's Hannah is generally allowed to be an exception to the Scottish housekeepers, and stands unparalleled for cleanliness among the women of Auld Reekie; but the cleanliness of Hannah is still childishness compared to the scrupulous purifications of these people, who seem to carry into the minor decencies of life that conscientious rigour which they affect in their morals.

The parlour would have been gloomy, for the windows were small and the ceiling low; but the present proprietor had rendered it more cheerful by opening one end into a small conservatory, roofed with glass, and divided from the parlour by a partition of the same. I have never before seen this very pleasing manner of uniting the comforts of an apartment with the beauties of a garden, and I wonder it is not more practised by the great. Something of the kind is hinted at in a paper of the *Spectator*.

As I walked towards the conservatory to view it more closely, the parlour chimney engaged my attention. It was a pile of massive stone, entirely out of proportion to the size of the apartment. The front had once been an armorial scutcheon; for the hammer and chisel, which had been employed to deface the shield or crest, had left uninjured the scroll beneath, which bore the pious motto, "*Trust in God*." Black-letter, you know, was my early passion, and the tombstones in the Greyfriars' Churchyard early yielded up to my knowledge as a decipherer what little they could tell of the forgotten dead.

Joshua Geddes paused when he saw my eye fixed on this relic of antiquity. "Thou canst read it?" he said.

I repeated the motto, and added, there seemed vestiges of a date. "It should be 1537," said he; "for so long ago, at the least computation, did my ancestors, in the blinded times of Papistry, possess these lands, and in that year did they build their house."

"It is an ancient descent," said I, looking with respect upon the monument. "I am sorry the arms have been defaced."

It was perhaps impossible for my friend, Quaker as he was, to be altogether void of respect for the pedigree which he began to recite to me, disclaiming all the while the vanity usually connected with

et; in short, with the air of mingled melancholy, regret, and
 ous dignity, with which Jack Fawkes used to tell us, at College,
 s ancestor's unfortunate connection with the Gunpowder Plot.
 "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher;"—thus harangued Joshua
 les of Mount Sharon;—"if we ourselves are nothing in the sight
 eaven, how much less than nothing must be our derivation from
 n bones and mouldering dust, whose immortal spirits have long
 e gone to their private account? Yes, friend Latimer, my ances-
 were renowned among the ravenous and blood-thirsty men who
 dwelt in this vexed country; and so much were they famed for
 ssful freebooting, robbery, and bloodshed, that they are said to
 been called Geddes, as likening them to the fish called a Jack,
 , or Luce, and in our country tongue, a *Ged*—a goodly distinc-
 truly for Christian men! Yet did they paint this shark of the
 waters upon their shields, and these profane priests of a wicked
 try, the empty boasters called heralds, who make engraven
 es of fishes, fowls, and fourfooted beasts, that men may fall down
 worship them, assigned the *Ged* for the device and escutcheon
 y fathers, and hewed it over their chimneys, and placed it above
 tombs; and the men were elated in mind, and became yet more
 like, slaying, leading into captivity, and dividing the spoil, until
 place where they dwelt obtained the name of Sharing-Knowe,
 the booty which was there divided amongst them and their ac-
 lices. But a better judgment was given to my father's father,
 p Geddes, who, after trying to light his candle at some of the
 wildfires then held aloft at different meetings and steeple-houses,
 ight obtained a spark from the lamp of the blessed George Fox,
 came into Scotland spreading light among Darkness, as he him-
 ath written, as plentifully as fly the sparkles from the hoof of
 orse which gallops swiftly along the stony road."—Here the
 Quaker interrupted himself with, "And that is very true, I must
 eedily to see after the condition of Solomon."

Quaker servant here entered the room with a tray, and inclining
 ead towards his master, but not after the manner of one who
 said composedly, "Thou art welcome home, friend Joshua, we
 eted thee not so early; but what hath befallen Solomon thy horse?"
 What hath befallen him, indeed?" said my friend; "hath he not
 returned hither by the child whom they call Benjie?"
 e hath," said his domestic, "but it was after a strange fashion;
 e came hither at a swift and furious pace, and flung the child
 e from his back, upon the heap of dung which is in the stable-

am glad of it," said Joshua, hastily,—“glad of it, with all my
 and spirit!—But stay, he is the child of the widow—hath the
 ny hurt?"

ot so," answered the servant, "for he rose and fled swiftly"
 hua muttered something about a scourge, and then inquired
 Solomon's present condition.

e seetheth like a steaming caldron," answered the servant;
 Bauldie, the lad, walketh him about the yard with a halter, lest
 e cold."

Mr Geddes hastened to the stable-yard to view personally the condition of his favourite, and I followed, to offer my counsel as a jockey—Don't laugh, Alan, sure I have jockeyship enough to assist a Quaker—in this unpleasing predicament.

The lad who was leading the horse seemed to be no Quaker, though his intercourse with the family had given him a touch of Quaker prim sobriety of look and manner. He assured Joshua that his horse had received no injury, and I even hinted that the exercise would be of service to him. Solomon himself neighed towards his master, and rubbed his head against the good Quaker's shoulder, as if to assure him of his being quite well; so that Joshua returned in comfort to his parlour, where breakfast was now about to be displayed.

I have since learned that the affection of Joshua for his pointer was considered as inordinate by some of his own sect; and that he has been much blamed for permitting it to be called by the name of Solomon, or any other name whatever; but he has gained so much respect and influence among them that they overlook these foibles.

I learned from him (whilst the old servant, Jehoiachim, entered and re-entering, seemed to make no end of the materials which he brought in for breakfast) that his grandfather Philip, the convert of George Fox, had suffered much from the persecution to which the harmless devotees were subjected on all sides during that intolerant period, and much of their family estate had been dilapidated. His better days dawned on Joshua's father, who, connecting himself with a marriage with a wealthy family of Quakers in Lancashire, engaged successfully in various branches of commerce, and redeemed the remnants of the property, changing its name in sense, without any alteration of sound, from the Border appellation of Sharing-Kirk to the evangelical appellation of Mount Sharon.

This Philip Geddes, as I before hinted, had imbibed the taste for horticulture and the pursuits of the florist, which are not uncommon among the peaceful sect he belonged to. He had destroyed the remnants of the old peel-house, substituting the modern mansion in its place; and while he reserved the hearth of his ancestors' memory of their hospitality, as also the pious motto which the house chanced to assume, he failed not to obliterate the worldly military emblems displayed upon the shield and helmet, together with all their blazonry.

In a few minutes after Mr Geddes had concluded the account of himself and his family, his sister Rachel, the only surviving member of it, entered the room. Her appearance is remarkably pleasing, and although her age is certainly thirty at least, she still retains the shape and motion of an earlier period. The absence of every thing like fashion or ornament was, as usual, atoned for by the perfect neatness and cleanliness of her dress; and her simple cap was particularly suited to eyes which had the softness and simplicity of the dove's. Her features were also extremely agreeable, but had suffered a little through the ravages of that professed enemy to beauty, the small-pox; a disadvantage which was in part counterbalanced by a well-formed mouth, teeth like pearls, and a pleasant sobriety of smile, that seemed to wish good here and hereafter.

one she spoke to. You cannot make any of your vile inferences, Alan, for I have given a full-length picture of Rachel Geddes; but you cannot say in this case, as in the letter I have just received, she was passed over as a subject on which I feared to dilate. I am of this anon.

Well, we settled to our breakfast after a blessing, or rather an impromptu prayer, which Joshua made upon the occasion, and which his spirit moved him to prolong rather more than I felt altogether agreeable. Then, Alan, there was such a despatching of the good things of the morning, as you have not witnessed since you have seen Miss Latimer at breakfast. Tea and chocolate, eggs, ham, and sardines, not forgetting the broiled fish, disappeared with a celerity which seemed to astonish the good-humoured Quakers, who kept replenishing my plate with supplies, as if desirous of seeing whether they could, by any possibility, tire me out. One hint, however, I received, which put me in mind where I was. Miss Geddes had offered me a sweet-cake, which, at the moment, I declined; but presently afterwards, seeing it within my reach, I naturally enough helped myself to a slice, and had just deposited it beside my plate, when Joshua, mine host, not with the authoritative air of Sancho's doctor, Don Quixote, but in a very calm and quiet manner, lifted it away and placed it on the dish, observing only, "Thou didst refuse it before, and Latimer."

These good folks, Alan, make no allowance for what your good friend calls the Aberdeen-man's privilege, of "taking his word for it;" or what the wise call second thoughts.

Accepting this slight hint, that I was among a precise generation, there was nothing in my reception that was peculiar—unless, indeed, I were to notice the solicitous and uniform kindness with which all attentions of my new friends were seasoned, as if they were anxious to assure me that the neglect of worldly compliments interdicted by their sect, only served to render their hospitality more sincere. At length my hunger was satisfied, and the worthy Quaker, Joshua, with looks of great good-nature, had watched my progress, thus addressed his sister:—

"This young man, Rachel, hath last night sojourned in the tents of our neighbour, whom men call the Laird. I am sorry I had not seen him the evening before, for our neighbour's hospitality is too unobtrusively exercised to be well prepared with the means of welcome." "Nay, but, Joshua," said Rachel, "if our neighbour hath done a kindness, thou shouldst not grudge him the opportunity; and if our young friend hath fared ill for a night, he will the better relish what providence may send him of better provisions."

"And that he may do so at leisure," said Joshua, "we will pray Rachel, to tarry a day or twain with us: he is young, and is but entering upon the world, and our habitation may, if he will, be a resting-place from which he may look abroad upon the pilgrimage which he must make, and the path which he has to travel.—I sayst thou, friend Latimer? We constrain not our friends to follow our ways, and thou art, I think, too wise to quarrel with us for following our own fashions; and if we should even give thee a word of

advice, thou wilt not, I think, be angry, so that it is spoken season."

You know, Alan, how easily I am determined by anything sembling cordiality—and so, though a little afraid of the form of my host and hostess, I accepted their invitation, provided I could get some messenger to send to Shepherd's Bush for my servant portmanteau.

"Why, truly, friend," said Joshua, "thy outward frame would be improved by cleaner garments; but I will do thine errand myself to the Widow Gregson's house of reception, and send thy lad home with thy clothes. Meanwhile, Rachel will show thee these beautiful gardens, and then will put thee in some way of spending thy time usefully, till our meal calls us together at the second hour after noon. I bid thee farewell for the present, having some space to walk, see I must leave the animal Solomon to his refreshing rest."

With these words, Mr Joshua Geddes withdrew. Some ladies have known would have felt, or at least affected, reserve or embarrassment, at being left to do the honours of the grounds to (it would be out, Alan)—a smart young fellow—an entire stranger. She went out for a few minutes, and returned in her plain cloak and bonnet with her beaver-gloves, prepared to act as my guide, with as much simplicity as if she had been to wait upon thy father. So forth I sallied with my fair Quakeress.

If the house at Mount Sharon be merely a plain and convenient dwelling, of moderate size, and small pretensions, the gardens and offices, though not extensive, might rival an earl's in point of beauty and expense. Rachel carried me first to her own favourite resort—a poultry-yard, stocked with a variety of domestic fowls, of the most rare as well as the most ordinary kinds, furnished with every accommodation which may suit their various habits. A rivulet which sprang into a pond for the convenience of the aquatic birds, trickled over gravel as it passed through the yards dedicated to the land poultry, which were thus amply supplied with the means they use for digestion.

All these creatures seemed to recognise the presence of their mistress, and some especial favourites hastened to her feet, and continued to follow her as far as their limits permitted. She pointed out their peculiarities and qualities, with the discrimination of one who had made natural history her study; and I own I never looked on barn-door fowls with so much interest before—at least until they were boiled or roasted. I could not help asking the trying question how she could order the execution of any of the creatures of which she seemed so careful.

"It was painful," she said, "but it was according to the law of their being. They must die; but they knew not when death was approaching; and in making them comfortable while they lived, I contributed to their happiness as much as the conditions of their existence permitted to us."

I am not quite of her mind, Alan. I do not believe either pig or poultry would admit that the chief end of their being was to be killed and eaten. However, I did not press the argument, which my Quaker seemed rather desirous to escape; for, conducting

to the greenhouse, which was extensive, and filled with the best plants, she pointed out an aviary which occupied the farther where, she said, she employed herself with attending the in-ants, without being disturbed with any painful recollections concerning their future destination.

will not trouble you with any account of the various hot-houses and ens, and their contents. No small sum of money must have been nded in erecting and maintaining them in the exquisite degree od order which they exhibited. The family, I understood, were ected with that of the celebrated Millar, and had imbibed his for flowers, and for horticulture. But instead of murdering ical names, I will rather conduct you to the *policy*, or pleasure-en, which the taste of Joshua or his father had extended on the s betwixt the house and river. This also, in contradistinction e prevailing simplicity, was ornamented in an unusual degree. e were various compartments, the connection of which was well ged, and although the whole ground did not exceed five or six , it was so much varied as to seem four times larger. The space ined close alleys and open walks; a very pretty artificial water-a fountain also, consisting of a considerable jet-d'eau, whose ms glittered in the sunbeams, and exhibited a continual rainbow. e was a cabinet of verdure, as the French call it, to cool the ner heat, and there was a terrace sheltered from the north-east noble holly hedge, with all its glittering spears, where you might the full advantage of the sun in the clear frosty days of winter. now that you, Alan, will condemn all this as bad and antiquated; ver since Dodsley has described the Leasowes, and talked of n's imitations of nature, and Horace Walpole's late Essay on ening, you are all for simple nature—condemn walking up and stairs in the open air, and declare for wood and wilderness. *e quid nimis*. I would not deface a scene of natural grandeur uty, by the introduction of crowded artificial decorations; yet nay, I think, be very interesting, where the situation, in its al state, otherwise has no particular charms.

that, when I have a country-house (who can say how soon?) you ook for grottoes, and cascades, and fountains; nay, if you vex contradiction, perhaps I may go the length of a temple—so ke me not, for you see of what enormities I am capable. any rate, Alan, had you condemned as artificial the rest of l Geddes's grounds, there is a willow walk by the very verge stream, so sad, so solemn, and so silent, that it must have com-d your admiration. The brook, restrained at the ultimate ury of the grounds by a natural dam-dike or ledge of rocks, l, even in its present swollen state, scarcely to glide along; and le willow-trees, dropping their long branches into the stream, ed around them little coronals of the foam that floated down he more rapid stream above. The high rock, which formed oposite bank of the brook, was seen dimly through the branches, pale and splintered front, garlanded with long streamers of and other creeping plants, seemed a barrier between the quiet hich we trode, and the toiling and bustling world beyond.

The path itself, following the sweep of the stream, made a very gentle curve; enough, however, served by its inflection completely to turn you to the end of the walk, until you arrived at it. A deep and sullen sound, which increased as you proceeded, prepared you for this termination, which was indeed only a plain root-seat, from which you looked down a fall of about six or seven feet, where the brook flung itself over a ledge of natural rock I have already mentioned, which there crossed its course.

The quiet and twilight seclusion of this walk rendered it a fit scene for confidential communing; and having nothing more interesting to say to my fair Quaker, I took the liberty of questioning her about the Laird; for you are, or ought to be, aware, that next to discussing the affairs of the heart, the fair sex are most interested in those of their neighbours.

I did not conceal either my curiosity, or the check which it had received from Joshua, and I saw that my companion answered with embarrassment. "I must not speak otherwise than truly," she said, "and therefore I tell thee, that my brother dislikes, and that I dislike the man of whom thou hast asked me. Perhaps we are both wrong—but he is a man of violence, and hath great influence over many of the elements with which they contend. He hath no certain rank among them, which is not unusual, their rude fashion being to distinguish each other by nicknames; and they have called him the Laird of the Lakes (not remembering there should be no one else Lord, save one only), in idle derision; the pools of salt water left by the tide among the sands being called the Lakes of Solway."

"Has he no other revenue than he derives from these sands?" I asked.

"That I cannot answer," replied Rachel; "men say that he has not money, though he lives like an ordinary fisherman, and that he imparts freely of his means to the poor around him. They imagine that he is a man of consequence, once deeply engaged in the happy affair of the rebellion, and even still too much in danger from the government to assume his own name. He is often absent from his cottage at Broken-burn-cliffs, for weeks and months."

"I should have thought," said I, "that the government would surely at this time of day, be likely to proceed against any one even of the most obnoxious rebels. Many years have passed away——"

"It is true," she replied; "yet such persons may understand their being connived at depends on their living in obscurity. Indeed there can nothing certain be known among these rude people. The truth is not in them—most of them participate in the unwholesome trade betwixt these parts and the neighbouring shore of England, and they are familiar with every species of falsehood and deception."

"It is a pity," I remarked, "your brother should have been of such a description, especially as I understand he is at some acquaintance with them."

"Where, when, and about what matter?" answered Miss G. with an eager and timorous anxiety, which made me regret I had touched on the subject.

her, in a way as little alarming as I could devise, the purport of which passed betwixt this Laird of the Lakes and her brother at morning's interview.

"You affright me much," answered she; "it is this very circumstance which has scared me in the watches of the night. When my brother Joshua withdrew from an active share in the commercial concerns of my father, being satisfied with the portion of worldly wealth which he already possessed, there were one or two undertakings in which he retained an interest, either because his withdrawal might have been prejudicial to friends, or because he wished to employ some mode of occupying his time. Amongst the more important of these, is a fishing station on the coast, where, by certain contrived modes of erecting snares, opening at the advance of the tide and shutting at the reflux, many more fish are taken than can be destroyed by those who, like the men of Broken-burn, use only the cast-net and spear, or fishing-rod. They complain of these tide-fishing men call them, as an innovation, and pretend to a right to suppress and destroy them by the strong hand. I fear me, this man of violence, whom they call the Laird, will execute these his threats, and cannot be without both loss and danger to my brother."

"My brother Geddes," said I, "ought to apply to the civil magistrate; there are soldiers at Dumfries who would be detached for his protection." "You speakest, friend Latimer," answered the lady, "as one who is ignorant of the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. God forbid that we should endeavour to preserve nets of flax and stakes of wood, or the vain and ungodly gain which they procure for us, by the hands of men, and at the risk of spilling human blood!" "I respect your scruples," I replied; "but since such is your way of thinking, your brother ought to avert the danger by compromise and mission."

"Perhaps it would be best," answered Rachel; "but what can I do? Even in the best-trained temper there may remain some leaven of the old Adam; and I know not whether it is this or a better spirit which may maketh my brother Joshua determine, that though he will not yield by force, neither will he yield up his right to mere threats, nor courage wrong to others by yielding to menaces. His partners, however, confide in his steadiness; and that he must not disappoint them by yielding up their right for the fear of the threats of man, his own breath is in his nostrils."

"My observation convinced me that the spirit of the old sharers of the spoil was not utterly departed even from the bosom of the peace-maker; and I could not help confessing internally that Joshua was in the right, when he averred that there was as much courage in yielding as in exertion."

"As we approached the farther end of the willow walk, the sullen and continuous sound of the dashing waters became still more and more audible, and at length rendered it difficult for us to communicate with each other. The conversation dropped, but apparently my brother continued to dwell upon the apprehensions which it had excited. At the bottom of the walk, we obtained a view of the cascade, where the swollen brook flung itself in foam and tumult over

the natural barrier of rock, which seemed in vain to attempt its course. I gazed with delight, and, turning to express my sentiment to my companion, I observed that she had folded her hands in an attitude of sorrowful resignation, which showed her thoughts far from the scene which lay before her. When she saw that abstraction was observed, she resumed her former placidity of manner; and having given me sufficient time to admire this termination of our sober and secluded walk, proposed that we should return to the house through her brother's farm. "Even we Quakers, as we are called, have our little pride," she said; "and my brother Joshua would not forgive me, were I not to show thee the fields which taketh delight to cultivate, after the newest and best fashion of which, I promise thee, he hath received much praise from his judges, as well as some ridicule from those who think it folly to prove on the customs of our ancestors."

As she spoke she opened a low door, leading through a mossy ivy-coloured wall, the boundary of the pleasure-ground, into the fields; through which we moved by a convenient path, leading to good taste and simplicity, by stile and hedgerow, through pasture and arable, and woodland; so that, in all ordinary weather, the man might, without even soiling his shoes, perform his perambulation round the farm. There were seats also on which to rest; and they were not adorned with inscriptions, nor quite so frequent in occurrence as those mentioned in the account of the Leasowes, their situation always chosen with respect to some distant prospect to be commanded, or some home-view to be enjoyed.

But what struck me most in Joshua's domain was the quantity and the tameness of the game. The hen partridge scarce abandoned her roost at the foot of the hedge where she had assembled her coveys, though the path went close beside her; and the hare, remaining in her form, gazed at us as we passed, with her full dark eye, or lazily and hopping to a little distance, stood erect to look at us with more curiosity than apprehension. I observed to Miss Geddes the extreme tameness of these timid and shy animals, and she informed me that their confidence arose from protection in the summer, and relief during the winter.

"They are pets," she said, "of my brother, who considers them the better entitled to his kindness than they are a race persecuted in the world in general. He denieth himself," she said, "even the company of a dog, that these creatures may here at least enjoy undisturbed security. Yet this harmless or humane propensity, or humanness, hath given offence," she added, "to our dangerous neighbours."

She explained this by telling me that my host of the preceding night was remarkable for his attachment to field-sports, which he pursued without much regard to the wishes of the individuals over whose property he followed them. The undefined mixture of respect and fear with which he was generally regarded, induced most of the neighbouring landholders to connive at what they would perhaps another have punished as a trespass; but Joshua Geddes would not permit the intrusion of any one upon his premises, and as he had before offended several country neighbours, who, because he

er shoot himself nor permit others to do so, compared him to
 og in the manger, so he now aggravated the displeasure which
 aid of the Lakes had already conceived against him, by posi-
 debarring him from pursuing his sport over his grounds—"So
 said Rachel Geddes, "I sometimes wish our lot had been cast
 ere than in these pleasant borders, where, if we had less of
 y around us, we might have had a neighbourhood of peace and
 will."

at length returned to the house, where Miss Geddes showed
 small study, containing a little collection of books, in two separ-
 esses.

these," said she, pointing to the smaller press, "will, if thou be-
 st thy leisure upon them, do thee good; and these," pointing
 e other and larger cabinet, "can, I believe, do thee little harm.
 of our people do indeed hold, that every writer who is not with
 against us; but brother Joshua is mitigated in his opinions, and
 pondeth with our friend John Scot of Amwell, who hath him-
 onstructed verses well approved of even in the world. I wish
 many good thoughts till our family meet at the hour of dinner."
 t alone, I tried both collections; the first consisted entirely of
 ous and controversial tracts, and the latter formed a small selec-
 f history, and of moral writers, both in prose and verse.

ther collection promising much amusement, thou hast, in these
 pages, the fruits of my tediousness; and truly, I think writing
 y (one's-self being the subject) is as amusing as reading that of
 n countries at any time.

I, still more drunk than sober, arrived in due time with my
 anteau, and enabled me to put my dress into order, better be-
 this temple of cleanliness and decorum, where (to conclude) I
 e I shall be a sojourner for more days than one.¹

—I have noted your adventure, as you home-bred youths may
 ps term it, concerning the visit of your doughty laird. We
 lers hold such an incident of no great consequence, though it
 erve to embellish the uniform life of Brown's Square. But art
 ot ashamed to attempt to interest one who is seeing the world
 ge, and studying human nature on a large scale, by so bald a
 ive? Why, what does it amount to, after all, but that a Tory
 dined with a Whig Lawyer? no very uncommon matter, espe-
 as you state Mr Herries to have lost the estate, though retain-
 he designation. The Laird behaves with haughtiness and
 inence—nothing out of character in that—is *not* kicked down
 as he ought to have been, were Alan Fairford half the man
 e would wish his friends to think him.—Ay, but then, as the
 lawyer, instead of showing his friend the door, chose to make
 it himself, he overheard the Laird aforesaid ask the old lawyer
 ning Darsie Latimer—no doubt earnestly inquiring after the
 me, accomplished inmate of his family, who has so lately made
 s his bow, and declined the honour of following her farther.

¹ See Note F. *Residence with the Quaker*

You laugh at me for my air-drawn castles; but confess, have not surer footing, in general, than two words spoken by such a as Herries? And yet—and yet—I would rally the matter off. And but in dark nights even the glow-worm becomes an object of lustre, and to one plunged in my uncertainty and ignorance the slightest gleam that promises intelligence is interesting. My life is like a subterranean river in the Peak of Derby, visible only where it crosses the celebrated cavern. I am here, and this much I know; but whither I have sprung from, or whither my course of life is like to tend, shall tell me? Your father, too, seemed interested and alarmed, talked of writing; would to Heaven he may!—I send daily to post-town for letters.

LETTER VIII.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

THOU mayst clap thy wings and crow as thou pleasest. You go in search of adventures, but adventures come to me unsought for; oh! in what a pleasing shape came mine, since it arrived in the form of a client—and a fair client to boot! What think you of that, Darsie, you who are such a sworn squire of dames? Will this match my adventures with thine, that hunt salmon on horseback, will it not, besides, eclipse the history of a whole tribe of Broadbriars?—but I must proceed methodically.

When I returned to-day from the college I was surprised to see a broad grin distending the adust countenance of the faithful James Wilkinson, which, as the circumstance seldom happens above once a-year, was a matter of some surprise. Moreover, he had a knowing glance with his eye, which I should have as soon expected from a dandy waiter—an article of furniture to which James, in his usual state, may be happily assimilated. “What the devil is the matter, James?”

“The devil may be in the matter for aught I ken,” said James, with another provoking grin; “for here has been a woman calling for you, Maister Alan.”

“A woman calling for me?” said I in surprise; for you know that, excepting old Aunt Peggy, who comes to dinner of a Sunday, and the still older Lady Bedrooket, who calls ten times a-year for her quarterly payment of her jointure of four hundred merks, a female scarcely approaches our threshold, as my father visits all his female clients at their own lodgings. James protested, however, that it had been a lady calling, and for me. “As bonny a lass as I have ever seen,” added James, “since I was in the Fusileers, and kept company with Peg Baxter.” Thou knowest all James’s gay recollections go back to the period of his military service, the years he has spent in ours having probably been dull enough.

“Did the lady leave no name nor place of address?”

“No,” replied James; “but she asked when you wad be at h—

I appointed her for twelve o'clock, when the house was to be quiet, your father at the Bank."

"For shame, James! how can you think my father's being at home abroad could be of consequence?—The lady is of course a decent one?"

"I'll upbraid her that, sir—she is none of your—*whew*"—[Here he supplied a blank with a low whistle]—"but I didna ken—my mother makes an unco wark if a woman comes here."

He passed into my own room, not ill-pleased that my father was absent notwithstanding I had thought it proper to rebuke James for having so contrived it. I disarranged my books, to give them the appearance of a graceful confusion on the table, and laying my foils (since your departure) across the mantelpiece, that the lady might see I was *tam Marte quam Mercurio*—I endeavoured to disarrange my dress so as to resemble an elegant morning dishabille—gave my hair the general shade of powder which marks the gentleman—laid my watch and seals on the table, to hint that I understood the value of time;—and when I had made all these arrangements, of which I am a little ashamed when I think of them, I had nothing more to do than to watch the dial-plate till the index pointed to noon. Five minutes elapsed, which I allowed for variation of clocks—five minutes more rendered me anxious and doubtful—and five minutes more would have made me impatient.

"Tough as thou wilt; but remember, Darsie, I was a lawyer, engaged his first client—a young man, how strictly bred up I need not remind you, expecting a private interview with a young and beautiful woman. But ere the third term of five minutes had elapsed, the door-bell was heard to tinkle low and modestly, as if touched by a timid hand.

James Wilkinson, swift in nothing, is, as thou knowest, peculiarly so in answering the door-bell; and I reckoned on five minutes ere his solemn step should have ascended the stair. Time passed, thought I, for a peep through the blinds, and was hastening to the window accordingly. But I reckoned without my host; for he, who had his own curiosity as well as I, was lying *perdu* in the ready to open at the first tinkle; and there was, "This way, ma'am—The lady, Mr Alan," before I could get to the door in which I proposed to be discovered, seated in all legal dignity. The consciousness of being half caught in the act of peeping, and that native air of awkward bashfulness of which I am told I shall soon free me, kept me standing on the floor in some confusion; while the lady, disconcerted on her part, remained on the spot in the old of the room. James Wilkinson, who had his senses most about him, and was perhaps willing to prolong his stay in the apartment, busied himself in setting a chair for the lady, and recalled me to good-breeding by the hint. I invited her to take possession of the room and bid James withdraw.

My visitor was undeniably a lady, and probably considerably above ordinary rank—very modest, too, judging from the mixture of diffidence and timidity with which she moved, and at my entreaty sat down. Her dress was, I should suppose, both handsome and fashion-

able; but it was much concealed by a walking cloak of green fancifully embroidered; in which, though heavy for the season, person was enveloped, and which, moreover, was furnished with hood.

The devil take that hood, Darsie! for I was just able to distinguish that, pulled as it was over the face, it concealed from me, as I was convinced, one of the prettiest countenances I have seen, and which, from a sense of embarrassment, seemed to be crimsoned with a deep blush. I could see her complexion was beautiful—her chin fine—her eyes turned—her lips coral—and her teeth rivals to ivory. But far from the deponent sayeth not; for a clasp of gold, ornamented with a sapphire, closed the envious mantle under the incognita's throat, and the cursed hood concealed entirely the upper part of the face.

I ought to have spoken first, that is certain; but ere I could utter my phrases well arranged, the young lady, rendered desperate, I suppose, by my hesitation, opened the conversation herself.

"I fear I am an intruder, sir—I expected to meet an elderly gentleman."

This brought me to myself. "My father, madam, perhaps, you inquired for Alan Fairford—my father's name is Alexander."

"It is Mr Alan Fairford, undoubtedly, with whom I wished to speak," she said, with greater confusion; "but I was told that he was advanced in life."

"Some mistake, madam, I presume, betwixt my father and mine—our Christian names have the same initials, though the terminations are different.—I—I—I would esteem it a most fortunate thing if I could have the honour of supplying my father's place in anything that could be of service to you."

"You are very obliging, sir." A pause, during which she seemed undecided whether to rise or sit still.

"I am just about to be called to the bar, madam," said I, in hopes to remove her scruples to open her case to me; "and if my advice or opinion could be of the slightest use, although I cannot presently say that they are much to be depended upon, yet——"

The lady arose. "I am truly sensible of your kindness, sir; and I have no doubt of your talents. I will be very plain with you—I will tell you whom I came to visit; although, now that we have met, I think it will be much better that I should commit my communication to writing."

"I hope, madam, you will not be so cruel—so tantalising, I would say. Consider, you are my first client—your business my first consultation—do not do me the displeasure of withdrawing your confidence because I am a few years younger than you seem to be expected—My attention shall make amends for my want of experience."

"I have no doubt of either," said the lady, in a grave tone, and endeavoured to restrain the air of gallantry with which I had endeavoured to address her. "But when you have received my letter, you will find good reasons assigned why a written communication will best suit my purpose. I wish you, sir, a good morning." And she retired to the apartment, her poor baffled counsel scraping, and bowing

logising for anything that might have been disagreeable to her, though the front of my offence seems to be my having been dis-
 dered to be younger than my father.

The door was opened—out she went—walked along the pavement,
 ned down the close, and put the sun, I believe, into her pocket
 n she disappeared, so suddenly did dulness and darkness sink
 n on the square, when she was no longer visible. I stood for a
 ment as if I had been senseless, not recollecting what a fund of
 rtainment I must have supplied to our watchful friends on the
 r side of the green. Then it darted on my mind that I might
 her, and ascertain at least who or what she was. Off I set—ran
 n the close, where she was no longer to be seen, and demanded
 ne of the dyer's lads whether he had seen a lady go down the
 e, or had observed which way she turned.

A leddy!"—said the dyer, staring at me with his rainbow coun-
 nce. "Mr Alan, what takes you out, rinning like daft, without
 hat?"

The devil take my hat!" answered I, running back, however, in
 st of it; snatched it up, and again sallied forth. But as I reached
 head of the close once more, I had sense enough to recollect that
 pursuit would be now in vain. Besides, I saw my friend, the
 neyman dyer, in close confabulation with a pea-green personage
 s own profession, and was conscious, like Scrub, that they talked
 e, because they laughed consumedly. I had no mind, by a second
 en appearance, to confirm the report that Advocate Fairford was
 n daft," which had probably spread from Campbell's close-foot to
 Mealmarket Stairs; and so slunk back within my own hole again.
 y first employment was to remove all traces of that elegant and
 ful disposition of my effects, from which I had hoped for so much
 it; for I was now ashamed and angry at having thought an
 nt upon the mode of receiving a visit which had commenced so
 eably, but terminated in a manner so unsatisfactory. I put my
 s in their places—threw the foils into the dressing-closet—tor-
 ing myself all the while with the fruitless doubt, whether I had
 ed an opportunity or escaped a stratagem, or whether the young
 on had been really startled, as she seemed to intimate, by the
 me youth of her intended legal adviser. The mirror was not
 turally called in to aid; and that cabinet-counsellor pronounced
 rather short, thick-set, with a cast of features fitter, I trust, for
 ar than the ball—not handsome enough for blushing virgins to
 for my sake, or even to invent sham cases to bring them to my
 bers—yet not ugly enough either to scare those away who came
 al business—dark, to be sure, but—*nigri sunt hyacinthi*—there
 pretty things to be said in favour of that complexion.

length—as common sense will get the better in all cases, when
 n will but give it fair play—I began to stand convicted in my
 mind, as an ass before the interview, for having expected too
 —an ass during the interview, for having failed to extract the
 real purpose—and an especial ass, now that it was over, for
 ing so much about it. But I can think of nothing else, and
 fore I am determined to think of this to some good purpose.

You remember Murtough O'Hara's defence of the Catholic doctrine of confession; because, "by his soul, his sins were always a great burden to his mind, till he had told them to the priest; and once confessed, he never thought more about them." I have told you his receipt, therefore; and having poured my secret mortification into thy trusty ear, I will think no more about this maid of the name.

"Who, with no face, as 'twere, outfaced me."

four o'clock

Plague on her green mantle, she can be nothing better than a fairy; she keeps possession of my head yet! All during dinner-time I was terribly absent; but, luckily, my father gave the whole of my reverie to the abstract nature of the doctrine, *Vinco vincentem, ergo vinco te*; upon which brocard of law the Professor of morning lectured. So I got an early dismissal to my own crib, where I am studying, in one sense, *vincere vincentem*, to get the better of the silly passion of curiosity—I think—I think it amounts to nothing else—which has taken such possession of my imagination and is perpetually worrying me with the question—will she write to me? She will not—she will not! So says Reason, and adds, she should take the trouble to enter into correspondence with me, who, instead of a bold, alert, prompt gallant, proved a chicken-hearted boy, and left her the whole awkwardness of explanation, which she should have met half-way? But then, says Fancy, she *will* write to me, she was not a bit that sort of person whom you, Mr Reason, in your wisdom, take her to be. She was disconcerted enough, without adding to her distress by any impudent conduct on my part. She will write, for — By Heaven, she *HAS* written, Darsie, and she will take a vengeance!—Here is her letter, thrown into the kitchen by a scullion too faithful to be bribed, either by money or whisky, to say more than that he received it, with sixpence, from an ordinary-looking woman as he was plying on his station near the Cross.

"FOR ALAN FAIRFORD, ESQUIRE, BARRISTER.

"SIR,

"Excuse my mistake of to-day. I had accidentally learnt that Darsie Latimer had an intimate friend and associate in Mr Alan Fairford. When I inquired for such a person he was pointed out to me at the Cross (as I think the Exchange of your city is called), a man of the character of a respectable elderly man—your father, as I now understand. On inquiry at Brown's Square, where I understood he resided, I used the full name of Alan, which naturally occasioned the trouble of this day's visit. Upon farther inquiry, I am led to believe that you are likely to be the person most active in the matter to which I am now about to direct your attention; and I regret those circumstances, arising out of my own particular situation, which prevent my communicating to you personally what I now apprise you of in this matter.

Your friend, Mr Darsie Latimer, is in a situation of considerable peril. You are doubtless aware that he has been cautioned not to show himself in England—Now, if he has not absolutely transgressed this friendly injunction, he has at least approached as nearly to the threatened danger as he could do, consistently with the letter of the prohibition. He has chosen his abode in a neighbourhood very perilous to him; and it is only by a speedy return to Edinburgh, or at least by a removal to some more remote part of Scotland, that he can escape the machinations of those whose enmity he has to fear. I cannot speak in mystery, but my words are not the less certain; and, I believe, you know enough of your friend's fortunes to be aware that I could not write this much without being even more intimate with them than you are.

If he cannot, or will not, take the advice here given, it is my opinion that you should join him, if possible, without delay, and urge, by your personal presence and entreaty, the arguments which may be ineffectual in writing. One word more, and I implore of your goodness to take it as it is meant. No one supposes that Mr Fairford's zeal in his friend's service needs to be quickened by mercenary considerations. But report says that Mr Alan Fairford, not having yet entered on his professional career, may, in such a case as this, want the assistance, though he cannot want the inclination, to act with promptness. The enclosed note Mr Alan Fairford must be pleased to consider as his first professional emolument; and she who sends it hopes it may be the omen of unbounded success, though the fee comes from a source so unknown as that of

GREEN MANTLE."

A bank note of £20 was the enclosure, and the whole incident left me speechless with astonishment. I am not able to read over the beginning of my own letter, which forms the introduction to this extraordinary communication. I only know that, though mixed with a quantity of foolery (God knows very much different from my pre-conceived feelings), it gives an account sufficiently accurate, of the mysterious person from whom this letter comes, and that I have neither the time nor patience to separate the absurd commentary from the text, and that it is so necessary you should know.

Combine this warning, so strangely conveyed, with the caution imparted on you by your London correspondent, Griffiths, against visiting England—with the character of your Laird of the Solway Firth—lawless habits of the people on that frontier—where warrants are not easily executed, owing to the jealousy entertained by either country of the legal interference of the other; remember, that even Sir John Fielding said to my father, that he could never trace a rogue beyond the Brigg-end of Dumfries—that the distinctions of Whig and Tory, Papist and Protestant, keep that country in a loose and comparatively lawless state—of all this, my dearest Darsie, and remember that, while at this time Sharon of yours, you are residing with a family actually oppressed with forcible interference, and who, while their obstinacy provokes violence, are by principle bound to abstain from resistance. Now, let me tell you, professionally, that the legality of the mode

of fishing practised by your friend Joshua is greatly doubted by best lawyers; and that, if the stake-nets be considered as actually unlawful obstruction raised in the channel of the estuary, an assertion of persons who shall proceed, *via facti*, to pull down and destroy them, would not, in the eye of the law, be esteemed guilty of a felony. So, by remaining where you are, you are likely to be engaged in a quarrel with which you have nothing to do, and thus to enable your enemies, whoever these may be, to execute, amid the confusion and general hubbub, whatever designs they may have against your personal safety. Black-fishers, poachers, and smugglers, are a sort of gentry that will not be much checked, either by your Quaker's testimony or by your chivalry. If you are Don Quixote enough to lay land to rest, in defence of those of the stake-net, and of the sad-colored garment, I pronounce you but a lost knight; for, as I said before, I doubt if these potent redressers of wrongs, the justices and the constables, will hold themselves warranted to interfere. In a word, turn, my dear Amadis; the adventure of the Solway-nets is reserved for your worship. Come back, and I will be your faithful Sancho Panza upon a more hopeful quest. We will beat about to and fro, in search of this Urganda, the Unknown She of the Gown and Mantle, who can read this, the riddle of thy fate, better than Eppeie of Buckhaven,¹ or Cassandra herself.

I would fain trifle, Darsie; for, in debating with you, jests sometimes go farther than arguments; but I am sick at heart and cannot keep the ball up. If you have a moment's regard for our friendship we have so often vowed to each other, let my wishes at once prevail over your own venturous and romantic temper. I am quite serious in thinking, that the information communicated to your father by this Mr Herries, and the admonitory letter of the young lady, bear upon each other; and that, were you here, you might learn something from one or other, or from both, that might throw light on your birth and parentage. You will not, surely, prefer any idle whim to the prospect which is thus held out to you?

I would, agreeably to the hint I have received in the young lady's letter (for I am confident that such is her condition), have been with you to urge these things, instead of pouring them out upon paper. But you know that the day for my trials is appointed. I have already gone through the form of being introduced to the examiners, and have gotten my titles assigned me. All this will not keep me at home, but my father would view any irregularity upon this occasion as a mortal blow to the hopes which he has cherished most fondly during his life—viz. my being called to the bar with some credit. For my own part, I know there is no great difficulty in passing these formal examinations, else how have so many of our acquaintance got through them? But, to my father, these formalities compose an august and serious solemnity, to which he has long looked forward, and my absenting myself at this moment will well-nigh drive him distracted. Yet I shall go altogether distracted myself, if I have not an instant assurance from you that you are

¹ Well known in the Chap-Book, called the History of Buckhaven.

hither—Meanwhile I have desired Hannah to get your little into the best order possible. I cannot learn that my father has written to you; nor has he spoken more of his communication Birrenswork; but when I let him have some inkling of the errors you are at present incurring, I know my request that you return immediately, will have his cordial support. Another reason yet—I must give a dinner, as usual, upon my session, to our friends; and my father, laying aside all his usual considerations of economy, has desired it may be in the best style possible. Come hither then, dear Darsie! or, I protest to you, I shall examine you, admission-dinner, and guests, to the devil, and, in person, to fetch you with a vengeance. Thine, in much
A. F.

LETTER IX.

ALEXANDER FAIRFORD, W.S., TO MR DARSIE LATIMER.

DEAR MR DARSIE,

HAVING been your factor *loco tutoris*, or rather, I ought to say, in correctness (since I acted without warrant from the Court), your *tutorum gestor*; that connection occasions my present writing. Although having rendered an account of my intromissions, which have been regularly approved of, not only by yourself (whom I could prevail upon to look at more than the docket and sum-total), but by the worthy Mr Samuel Griffiths of London, being the hand through whom the remittances were made, I may, in some sense, be considered as to you *functus officio*; yet, to speak facetiously, I trust will not hold me accountable as a vicious intromitter, should I consider myself as occasionally interested in your welfare. My reasons for writing, at this time, are twofold. I have met with a Mr Herries of Birrenswork, a gentleman of very good descent, but who hath in time past been in difficulties, nor know if his affairs are yet well redd. Birrenswork says that he knew he was very familiar with your father, whom he states to have been called Ralph Latimer of Langcote-Hall, in Westmoreland; he mentioned family affairs, which it may be of the highest importance to you to be acquainted with; but as he seemed to decline communicating them to me, I could not civilly urge him thereunto. As much I know, that Mr Herries had his own share in the late unfortunate and unhappy matter of 1745, and was in trouble about it, although that is probably now over. Moreover, although he did not profess the Popish religion openly, he had an eye that way. And of these are reasons why I have hesitated to recommend him to you, although who maybe hath not altogether so well-founded his opinions respecting Kirk and State, that they might not be changed by some new wind of doctrine. For I have observed ye, Master Darsie, rather tinctured with the old leaven of prelacy—this under your

leave; and although God forbid that you should be in any man disaffected to the Protestant Hanoverian line, yet ye have ever lo to hear the blawing, blazing stories which the Hieland gentler tell of those troublous times, which, if it were their will, they better pretermit, as tending rather to shame than to honour. I come to me also by a side-wind, as I may say, that you have been neighbouring more than was needful among some of the pest sect of Quakers—a people who own neither priest, nor king, civil magistrate, nor the fabric of our law, and will not depone eit *in civilibus* or *criminalibus*, be the loss to the lieges what it n Anent which heresies it were good ye read “the Snake in the Gra or, “the Foot out of the Snare,” being both well-approved tra touching these doctrines.

Now, Mr Darsie, ye are to judge for yourself whether ye can safel your soul’s weal remain longer among these Papists and Quak these defections on the right hand, and fallings away on the left; and truly, if you can confidently resist these evil examples of doctri think ye may as well tarry in the bounds where ye are, until you Mr Herries of Birrenswork, who does assuredly know more of matters than I thought had been communicated to any man in S land. I would fain have precognosced him myself on these affairs found him unwilling to speak out, as I have partly intimated befo

To call a new cause—I have the pleasure to tell you, that Alan passed his private Scots Law examinations with good approbation great relief to my mind; especially as worthy Mr Pest told me in ear there was no fear of “the callant,” as he familiarly called which gives me great heart. His public trials, which are nothing comparison save a mere form, are to take place, by order of the ourable Dean of Faculty, on Wednesday first, and on Friday he on the gown, and gives a bit chack of dinner to his friends and acquaintances, as is, you know, the custom. Your company will wished for there, Master Darsie, by more than him, which I re to think is impossible to have, as well by your engagements, as our cousin, Peter Fairford, comes from the West on purpose, an have no place to offer him but your chamber in the wall. And, plain with you, after my use and wont, Master Darsie, it may b well that Alan and you do not meet till he is hefted, as it were, t new calling. You are a pleasant gentleman, and full of daf which may well become you, as you have enough (as I underst to uphold your merry humour. If you regard the matter wisely would perchance consider that a man of substance should be douce and staid demeanour; yet you are so far from growing g and considerate with the increase of your annual income, tha richer you become, the merrier I think you grow. But this mu at your own pleasure, so far as you are concerned. Alan, hov (overpassing my small savings), has the world to win; and lo and laughing, as you and he were wont to do, would soon mak powder flee out of his wig, and the pence out of his pocket. N theless, I trust you will meet when you return from your ram for there is a time, as the wise man sayeth, for gathering, and a for casting away; it is always the part of a man of sense to tak

hering time first. I remain, dear sir, your well-wishing friend,
obedient to command, ALEXANDER FAIRFORD.

P.S.—Alan's Thesis is upon the title *De periculo et commodo rei ditæ*, and is a very pretty piece of Latinity.—Ross-House, in our neighbourhood, is nearly finished, and is thought to excel Duff-House in nature.

LETTER X.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

THE plot thickens, Alan. I have your letter, and also one from your father. The last makes it impossible for me to comply with the request which the former urges. No—I cannot be with you, now; and that, for the best of all reasons—I cannot and ought not to counteract your father's anxious wishes. I do not take it unkind of him that he desires my absence. It is natural that he should wish his son what his son so well deserves—the advantage of a wiser and steadier companion than I seem to him. And yet I am sure I have often laboured hard enough to acquire that decency of demeanour which can no more be suspected of breaking bounds, than an owl catching a butterfly.

But it was in vain that I have knitted my brows till I had the headache, in order to acquire the reputation of a grave, solid, and well-governing youth. Your father always has discovered, or thought that he discovered a hare-brained eccentricity lying folded among the wrinkles of my forehead, which rendered me a perilous associate for a future counsellor and ultimate judge. Well, Corporal Nym's philosophy must be my comfort—"Things must be as they may."—I will not come to your father's house, where he wishes not to see me; nor as to your coming hither,—by all that is dear to me, I vow that you are guilty of such a piece of reckless folly—not to say undutiful cruelty, considering your father's thoughts and wishes—I will never speak to you again as long as I live! I am perfectly serious. And besides, your father, while he in a manner prohibits me from returning to Edinburgh, gives me the strongest reasons for continuing a little while longer in this country, by holding out the hope that I may receive from your old friend, Mr Herries of Birrenswark, some particulars concerning my origin, with which that ancient recusant must be acquainted.

That gentleman mentioned the name of a family in Westmoreland, to which he supposes me connected. My inquiries here after such a family have been ineffectual, for the borderers, on either side, know little of each other. But I shall doubtless find some English person to whom to make inquiries, since the confounded fetterlock clapped upon my movements by old Griffiths, prevents me repairing to England for a person. At least the prospect of obtaining some information is better here than elsewhere; it will be an apology for my making a

longer stay in this neighbourhood, a line of conduct which seems have your father's sanction, whose opinion must be sounder than that of your wandering damoselle.

If the road were paved with dangers which leads to such a discovery, I cannot for a moment hesitate to tread it. But in fact there is no peril in the case. If the Tritons of the Solway shall proceed to pull down honest Joshua's tide-nets, I am neither Quixote enough in disposition, nor Goliath enough in person, to attempt their protection. I have no idea of attempting to prop a falling house, by putting my shoulders against it. And, indeed, Joshua gave me a hint that the company which he belongs to, injured in the way threatened (some of them being men who thought after the fashion of the world) would pursue the rioters at law, and recover damages, in which probably his own ideas of non-resistance will not prevent his participating. Therefore the whole affair will take its course as law will, and I only mean to interfere when it may be necessary to direct the course of the plaintiffs to thy chambers; and I request they may find thee intimate with all the Scottish statutes concerning salmon-fishing from the *Lex Aquarum*, downward.

As for the Lady of the Mantle, I will lay a wager that the sun bedazzled thine eyes on that memorable morning, that everything thou didst look upon seemed green; and notwithstanding Jan Wilkinson's experience in the Fusileers, as well as his negative whistle, I will venture to hold a crown that she is but a what-shall-call't after all. Let not even the gold persuade you to the contrary. She may make a shift to cause you to disgorge that, and (immense spoil) a session's fees to boot, if you look not all the sharper about you. If it should be otherwise, and if indeed there lurk some mystery under this visitation, credit me, it is one which thou canst not penetrate, nor can I as yet even attempt to explain it; since, if I prove mistaken, and mistaken I may easily be, I would be fain to creep into Phalaris's bull, were it standing before me ready heated, rather than be roasted with thy raillery. Do not tax me with want of confidence; for the instant I can throw any light on the matter thou shalt have it; but while I am only blundering about in the dark, I do not choose to call wise folks to see me, perchance, break my neck against a post. So if you marvel at this,

“E'en marvel on till time makes all things plain.”

In the mean time, kind Alan, let me proceed in my diurnal.

On the third or fourth day after my arrival at Mount Sharon, that bald sexton to whom I have just referred you, did certainly lie more heavily along with me than he had done at first. The quietude, the morality of Joshua, and Huguenot simplicity of his sister, began to lose much of their raciness with their novelty, and my mode of life, by dint of being very quiet, began to feel abominably dull. It was as thou say'st, as if the Quakers had put the sun in their pocket; all around was soft and mild, and even pleasant; but there was, in the whole routine, a uniformity, a want of interest, a helpless and hopeless languor, which rendered life insipid. No doubt, my worthy landlady and hostess felt none of this void, this want of excitement, which

ing oppressive to their guest. They had their little round of
ations, charities, and pleasures; Rachel had her poultry-yard
onservatory, and Joshua his garden. Besides this, they enjoyed,
less, their devotional meditations; and, on the whole, time
l softly and imperceptibly on with them, though to me, who
or stream and cataract, it seemed absolutely to stand still. I
ated returning to Shepherd's Bush, and began to think, with
hankering, after little Benjie and the rod. The imp has ven-
hither, and hovers about to catch a peep of me now and then;
those the little sharper is angling for a few more sixpences. But
ould have been, in Joshua's eyes, a return of the washed sow
llowing in the mire, and I resolved, while I remained his guest,
re him so violent a shock to his prejudices. The next point
o shorten the time of my proposed stay; but, alas! that I felt
equally impossible. I had named a week; and however rashly
omise had been pledged, it must be held sacred, even according
letter, from which the Friends permit no deviation.

these considerations wrought me up to a kind of impatience yes-
evening; so that I snatched up my hat, and prepared for a
eyond the cultivated farm and ornamented grounds of Mount
n, just as if I were desirous to escape from the realms of art,
hose of free and unconstrained nature.

as scarcely more delighted when I first entered this peaceful
ne, than I now was—such is the instability and inconsistency
an nature!—when I escaped from it to the open downs, which
ormerly seemed so waste and dreary. The air I breathed felt
and more bracing. The clouds, riding high upon a summer
e, drove, in gay succession, over my head, now obscuring the
now letting its rays stream in transient flashes upon various
of the landscape, and especially upon the broad mirror of the
t Firth of Solway.

lvanced on the scene with the light step of a liberated captive;
ike John Bunyan's Pilgrim, could have found in my heart to
s I went on my way. It seemed as if my gaiety had accumu-
while suppressed, and that I was, in my present joyous mood,
ed to expend the savings of the previous week. But just as I
out to uplift a merry stave, I heard, to my joyful surprise, the
of three or more choristers, singing, with considerable success,
ely old catch,

“For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking;
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belonged to old Sir Thom o' Lyne;
As they went to the ferry, they were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking.”¹

he chorus ended there followed a loud and hearty laugh by
f cheers. Attracted by sounds which were so congenial to my
t feelings, I made towards the spot from which they came,—
usly however, for the downs, as had been repeatedly hinted to

¹ See Note G. “For all our men,” &c.

me, had no good name; and the attraction of the music, with rivalling that of the Syren's in melody, might have been followed similarly inconvenient consequences to an incautious amateur.

I crept on, therefore, trusting that the sinuosities of the ground broken as it was into knolls and sand-pits, would permit me to obtain a sight of the musicians before I should be observed by them. As I advanced, the old ditty was again raised. The voices seemed those of a man and two boys; they were rough, but kept good time, and were managed with too much skill to belong to the ordinary country people.

“ Jack looked at the sun, and cried, Fire, fire, fire;
Tom stabled his keffel in Birkendale mire;
Jem started a calf, and haloo'd for a stag;
Will mounted a gate-post instead of his nag:

For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking;
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belonged to old Sir Thom o' Lyne;
As they went to the ferry they were very very merry,
For all our men were drinking.”

The voices, as they mixed in their several parts, and ran through them, untwisting and again entwining all the links of the merry catch, seemed to have a little touch of the bacchanalian spirit which they celebrated, and showed plainly that the musicians were engaged in the same joyous revel as the *menyie* of old Sir Thom o' Lyne. At length I came within sight of them, three in number, where they were cosily niched into what you might call a *bunker*, a little sand-pit, dry and snug, and surrounded by its banks, and a screen of whins in full bloom.

The only one of the trio whom I recognised as a personal acquaintance was the notorious little Benjie, who, having just finished his stave, was cramming a huge luncheon of pie-crust into his mouth with one hand, while in the other he held a foaming tankard, his legs dancing with all the glee of a forbidden revel; and his features, which have at all times a mischievous archness of expression, were confessing the full sweetness of stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret.

There was no mistaking the profession of the male and female who were partners with Benjie in these merry doings. The male wore a long loose-bodied greatcoat (wrap-rascal as the vulgar term it) in a fiddle-case, with its straps, which lay beside him, and a small knapsack, which might contain his few necessities; a clear grey face, with features which, in contending with many a storm, had not lost a single line, and a careless expression of glee, animated at present, when he was exercising for his own pleasure the arts which he usually practised for bread,—all announced one of those peripatetic followers of Orpheus, whom the vulgar call a strolling fiddler. Gazing at them attentively, I easily discovered that, though the poor musician's eyes were open, their sense was shut, and that the ecstasy with which they turned them up to heaven only derived its apparent expression from his own internal emotions, but received no assistance from the visible objects around. Beside him sat his female companion, in a new hat, a blue coat, which seemed also to have been an article of

el, and a red petticoat. She was cleaner in person and in
s than such itinerants generally are; and, having been in her
strapping *bona roba*, she did not even yet neglect some atten-
to her appearance; wore a large amber necklace, and silver ear-
and had her plaid fastened across her breast with a brooch of
me metal.

man also looked clean, notwithstanding the meanness of his
and had a decent silk handkerchief well knotted about his
, under which peeped a clean owerlay. His beard also, instead
playing a grizzly stubble, unmoved for several days, flowed in
and comely abundance over the breast, to the length of six
, and mingled with his hair, which was but beginning to
t a touch of age. To sum up his appearance, the loose gar-
which I have described was secured around him by a large old-
ned belt, with brass studs, in which hung a dirk, with a knife
ork—its usual accompaniments. Altogether, there was some-
more wild and adventurous-looking about the man, than I
have expected to see in an ordinary modern crowder; and the
which he now and then drew across the violin, to direct his little
was decidedly that of no ordinary performer.

a must understand that many of these observations were the
of after-remark; for I had scarce approached so near as to get
net view of the party, when my friend Benjie's lurching attend-
which he calls by the appropriate name of Hemp, began to
his tail and ears, and, sensible of my presence, flew, barking
fury, to the place where I had meant to lie concealed till I
another song. I was obliged, however, to jump on my feet,
ntimidate Hemp, who would otherwise have bit me, by two
kicks on the ribs, which sent him howling back to his master.
le Benjie seemed somewhat dismayed at my appearance; but,
ating on my placability, and remembering, perhaps, that the
d Solomon was no palfrey of mine, he speedily affected great
and almost in one breath assured the itinerants that I was "a
gentleman, and had plenty of money, and was very kind to poor
and informed me that this was "Willie Steenson—Wandering
—the best fiddler that ever kittled thairm with horse-hair."
e woman rose and curtsied; and Wandering Willie sanctioned
n praises with a nod, and the ejaculation, "All is true that
the boy says."

ked him if he was of this country.

is country!" replied the blind man—"I am of every country
nd Scotland, and a wee bit of England to the boot. But yet I
some sense, of this country; for I was born within hearing
roar of Solway. Will I give your honour a touch of the auld
winner?"

preluded as he spoke, in a manner which really excited my
ty; and then taking the old tune of Galashiels for his theme,
ced it with a number of wild, complicated, and beautiful varia-
during which it was wonderful to observe how his sightless
as lighted up under the conscious pride and heartfelt delight
exercise of his own very considerable powers.

"What think you of that, now, for threescore and twa?"

I expressed my surprise and pleasure.

"A rant, man—an auld rant," said Willie; "naething like music ye hae in your ball-houses and your playhouses in Edinburgh, but it's weel aneugh anes in a way at a dyke-side.—Here's another—it's no a Scotch tune, but it passes for ane—Oswald made it himself, I reckon—he has cheated mony ane, but he canna cheat Willie."

He then played your favourite air of Roslin Castle, with a number of beautiful variations, some of which I am certain were almost extempore.

"You have another fiddle there, my friend," said I—"Have a comrade?" But Willie's ears were deaf, or his attention was busied with the tune.

The female replied in his stead, "O ay, sir—troth we have a partner—a gangrel body like oursells. No but my hinny might have been better if he had liked; for mony a bein nook in mony a ball-house has been offered to my hinny Willie, if he wad but just stand still and play to the gentles."

"Whisht, woman! whisht!" said the blind man, angrily, shaking his locks; "dinna deave the gentleman wi' your havers. Stay in the house and play to the gentles!—strike up when my leddy pleases and lay down the bow when my lord bids! Na, na, that's nae business for Willie.—Look out, Maggie—peer out, woman, and see if ye can see Robin coming.—De'il be in him! he has got to the lea-side, some smuggler's punch-bowl, and he wunna budge the night for doubt."

"That is your consort's instrument," said I—"Will you give me leave to try my skill?" I slipped at the same time a shilling into the woman's hand.

"I dinna ken whether I dare trust Robin's fiddle to ye," said Willie, bluntly. His wife gave him a twitch. "Hout awa, Maggie," he said in contempt of the hint; "though the gentleman has gien ye siller, he may have nae bow-hand for a' that, and I'll trust Robin's fiddle wi' an ignoramus.—But that's no sae mair amiss," he added, as I began to touch the instrument; "I am thinking ye have some skill o' the craft."

To confirm him in this favourable opinion, I began to execute such a complicated flourish as I thought must have turned Crow into a pillar of stone with envy and wonder. I scaled the top of the finger-board, to dive at once to the bottom—skipped with my fingers, like Timotheus, from shift to shift—struck arpeggios and harmonic tones, but without exciting any of the astonishment which I had expected.

Willie indeed listened to me with considerable attention; but when he was no sooner finished, than he immediately mimicked on his fiddle the fantastic complication of tones which I had produced, and made so whimsical a parody of my performance, that, although somewhat angry, I could not help laughing heartily, in which I was joined by Benjie, whose reverence for me held him under no restraint; while the poor dame, fearful, doubtless, of my taking of

amiliarity, seemed divided betwixt her conjugal reverence for Willie, and her desire to give him a hint for his guidance. At length the old man stopped of his own accord, and, as if he had recently rebuked me by his mimicry, he said, "But for a' that, ye may lay very weel wi' a little practice and some gude teaching. Ye maun learn to put the heart into it, man—to put the heart into it."

He played an air in simpler taste, and received more decided approval than his something like it, man. "Od, ye are a clever birkie!" The woman touched his coat again. "The gentleman is a gentle-Willie—ye maunna speak that gate to him, hinny." "Ye deevil I maunna!" said Willie; "and what for maunna I? He was ten gentles, he canna draw a bow like me, can he?" "Deed I cannot, my honest friend," said I; "and if you will go on to a house hard by, I would be glad to have a night with

me. I looked round, and observed Benjie smothering a laugh, I was sure had mischief in it. I seized him suddenly by the hand and made him confess that he was laughing at the thoughts of reception which a fiddler was likely to get from the Quakers at Sharon. I chucked him from me, not sorry that his mirth reminded me in time of what I had for the moment forgotten; I invited the itinerant to go with me to Shepherd's Bush, from where I proposed to send word to Mr Geddes that I should not be home that evening. But the minstrel declined this invitation also. He was engaged for the night, he said, to a dance in the neighbourhood, and vented a round execration on the laziness or carelessness of his comrade, who had not appeared at the place of rendezvous.

"I will go with you instead of him," said I, in a sudden whim; "I will give you a crown to introduce me as your comrade." "You gang instead of Rob the Rambler! My certie, freend, ye o blate!" answered Wandering Willie, in a tone which announced death to my frolic.

Maggie, whom the offer of the crown had not escaped, began then on that scent with a maundering sort of lecture. "Oh! hinny Willie, whan will ye learn to be wise? There's a way to be win for naething but saying ae man's name instead of another. And, wae's me! I hae just a shilling of this gentleman's; and a boddle of my ain; and ye wunna bend your will sae easy as to take up the siller that's flung at your feet! Ye will be the death of a cadger's powney, in a wreath of drift! and what can ye do better than lie down and die wi' you? for ye winna let me trouble to keep either you or mysell leevin."

"And your nonsense tongue, woman," said Willie, but less absolute than before. "Is he a real gentleman, or ane of the player-

"Ye uphaud him a real gentleman," said the woman.

"Ye uphaud ye ken little of the matter," said Willie; "let us see the uphaud of your hand, neebor, gin ye like."

I gave him my hand. He said to himself, "Ay, ay, here fingers that have seen canny service." Then running his hand o' my hair, my face, and my dress, he went on with his soliloquy; "ay, muisted hair, braidclaith o' the best, and seenteen hundred li on his back, at the least o' it.—And how do you think, my b birkie, that you are to pass for a tramping fiddler?"

"My dress is plain," said I,—indeed I had chosen my most nary suit, out of compliment to my Quaker friends,—“and I easily pass for a young farmer out upon a frolic. Come, I double the crown I promised you.”

"Damn your crowns!" said the disinterested man of music. would like to have a round wi' you, that's certain;—but a far and with a hand that never held pleugh-stilt or pettle, that will n do. Ye may pass for a trades-lad from Dumfries, or a student i the ramble, or the like o' that.—But hark ye, lad; if ye expect t ranting among the queans o' lasses where ye are gaun, ye will c by the waur, I can tell ye; for the fishers are wild chaps, and bide nae taunts."

I promised to be civil and cautious; and, to smooth the woman, I slipped the promised piece into her hand. The organs of the blind man detected this little manoeuvre.

"Are ye at it again wi' the siller, ye jaud? I'll be sworn ye rather hear ae twalpenney clink against another, than have a sp from Rory Dall,¹ if he was coming alive again anes errand. C down the gate to Lucky Gregson's and get the things ye want, bide there till ele'en hours in the morn; and if you see Robin, him on to me."

"Am I no gaun to the ploy, then?" said Maggie, in a disappointed tone.

"And what for should ye?" said her lord and master; "to d a' night, I'se warrant, and not to be fit to walk your tae's-length morn, and we have ten Scots miles afore us? Na, na. Stable steed, and pit your wife to bed, when there's night wark to do."

"Aweel, aweel, Willie hinny, ye ken best; but oh, take an care o' yoursell, and mind ye haena the blessing o' sight."

"Your tongue gars me whiles tire of the blessing of hea woman," replied Willie, in answer to this tender exhortation.

But I now put in for my interest. "Hollo, good folks, reme that I am to send the boy to Mount Sharon, and if you go t Shepherd's Bush, honest woman, how the deuce am I to guid blind man where he is going? I know little or nothing c country."

"And ye ken mickle less of my hinny, sir," replied Maggie, think he needs ony guiding; he's the best guide himsell, tha find between Criffell and Carlisle. Horse-road and footpath, p road and kirk-road, high-road and cross-road, he kens ilka f ground in Nithsdale."

"Ay, ye might have said in braid Scotland, gudewife," add fiddler. "But gang your ways, Maggie, that's the first wise

¹ Blind Rorie. a famous musician according to tradition.

spoke the day. I wish it was dark night, and rain, and wind, for the gentleman's sake, that I might show him there is whiles ane had better want een than have them; for I am as true a body by darkness as by daylight."

Finally as well pleased that my companion was not put to give his last proof of his skill, I wrote a note with a pencil, desiring him to bring my horses at midnight, when I thought my frolic would be well-nigh over, to the place to which the bearer should find him, and I sent little Benjie with an apology to the worthy Mrs. S.

We parted in different directions, the good woman said, "Oh, ye wad but ask Willie to tell ye ane of his tales to shorten the time. He can speak like ony minister frae the pu'pit, and he might be een a minister himsell, but——" and your tongue, ye fule!" said Willie,—“But stay, Meg—gie us a kiss, we maunna part in anger, neither.”—And thus our society terminated.¹

LETTER XI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

WE are now to conceive us proceeding in our different directions towards the bare downs. Yonder flies little Benjie to the northward, the hound scampering at his heels, both running as if for dear life, though as the rogue is within sight of his employer, and certain to be caught, he walks very easy, so soon as he is out of ken. Stepping westward, you see Maggie's tall form and high-crowned hat, relieved by the fluttering of her plaid upon the left shoulder, darkening as the distance diminishes her size, and as the level sunbeams begin to sink behind the sea. She is taking her quiet journey to the Shepherd's Bush. On, stoutly striding over the lea, you have a full view of Darsie Cameron, with his new acquaintance, Wandering Willie, who, bating the fact that he has touched the ground now and then with his staff, not in a feeble groping manner, but with the confident air of an experienced pilot, heaving the lead when he has the soundings by heart, as firmly and boldly as if he possessed the eyes of Argus. They go, each with his violin slung at his back, but one of them at least totally ignorant whither their course is directed.

Wherefore did you enter so keenly into such a mad frolic? My wise counsellor—Why, I think, upon the whole, that as a man of loneliness, and a longing for that kindness which is interdicted in society, led me to take up my temporary residence at Sharon, the monotony of my life there, the quiet simplicity of conversation of the Geddeses, and the uniformity of their

It is certain that in many cases the blind have, by constant exercise of their other faculties, learned to overcome a defect which one would think incapable of being supplied. The reader must remember the celebrated Blind Jack of Knaresborough, who lived by the roads.

amusements and employments, wearied out my impatient temper, and prepared me for the first escapade which chance might throw in my way.

What would I have given that I could have procured that sober grave visage of thine, to dignify this joke, as it has done full many a one of thine own! Thou hast so happy a knack of doing the most foolish things in the wisest manner, that thou mightst pass thy extravagances for rational actions, even in the eyes of Prudence herself.

From the direction which my guide observed, I began to suspect that the dell at Brokenburn was our probable destination; and it became important to me to consider whether I could, with propriety or even perfect safety, intrude myself again upon the hospitality of my former host. I therefore asked Willie, whether we were bound for the Laird's, as folk called him.

"Do ye ken the Laird?" said Willie, interrupting a sonata by Corelli, of which he had whistled several bars with great precision.

"I know the Laird a little," said I; "and therefore I was deciding whether I ought to go to his town in disguise."

"I should doubt, not a little only, but a great deal, before I would ye there, my chap," said Wandering Willie; "for I am thinking it wad be worth little less than broken banes baith to you and me. Na, chap, we are no ganging to the Laird's, but to a blithe birlin on the Brokenburn-foot, where there will be mony a braw lad and lass, and maybe there may be some of the Laird's folks, for he never comes to sic splores himsell. He is all for fowling-piece and salmon-spear, now that pike and musket are out of the question."

"He has been a soldier, then?" said I.

"I'll warrant him a souter," answered Willie; "but take my advice, and speer as little about him as he does about you. Best to let sleeping dogs lie. Better say naething about the Laird, my friend, and tell me instead what sort of a chap ye are, that are sae ready to cleik in with an auld gaberlunzie fiddler? Maggie says ye're gentle, but a shilling maks a' the difference that Maggie kens between a gentleman and a simple, and your crowns wad mak ye a prince of blood in her een. But I am ane that ken full weel that ye may be a good claithe, and have a saft hand, and yet that may come off as naughtiness as weel as gentriness."

I told him my name, with the same addition I had formerly given to Mr Joshua Geddes; that I was a law-student, tired of my studies, and rambling about for exercise and amusement.

"And are ye in the wont of drawing up wi' a' the gangrel boys that ye meet on the high-road, or find cowering in a sand-bank upon the links?" demanded Willie.

"Oh no; only with honest folks like yourself, Willie," was my reply.

"Honest folks like me!—How do ye ken whether I am honest or what I am?—I may be the deevil himsell for what ye ken; for I have power to come disguised like an angel of light; and besides, I am a prime fiddler. He played a sonata to Corelli, ye ken."

There was something odd in this speech, and the tone in which

said. It seemed as if my companion was not always in his content mind, or that he was willing to try if he could frighten me. I laughed at the extravagance of his language, however, and asked in reply, if he was fool enough to believe that the foul fiend would play so silly a masquerade.

"Ye ken little about it—little about it," said the old man, shaking head and beard, and knitting his brows—"I could tell ye something about that."

What his wife mentioned of his being a tale-teller, as well as a physician, now occurred to me; and as you know I like tales of superstition, I begged to have a specimen of his talent as we went on.

"It is very true," said the blind man, "that when I am tired of piping thairm or singing ballants, I whiles mak a tale serve the folk among the country bodies; and I have some fearsome anes, that make the auld carlines shake on the settle, and the bits o' their skirl on their minnies out frae their beds. But this that I want to tell you was a thing that befell in our ain house in my father's time—that is, my father was then a haffins callant; and I will tell it to you, that it may be a lesson to you, that are but a young, thoughtless chap, wha ye draw up wi' on a lonely road; for muckle the dool and care that came o't to my gudesire."

He commenced his tale accordingly, in a distinct narrative tone of voice, which he raised and depressed with considerable skill; at times sinking almost into a whisper, and turning his clear but sightless eyeballs upon my face, as if it had been possible for him to witness the impression which his narrative made upon my features. I did not spare you a syllable of it, although it be of the longest; so I will make a dash—and begin

Wandering Willie's Tale.

Ye maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will lang for him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Hielandmen in Montrose's wars; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the sixteenth hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came to the throne, wha was in sic favour as the Laird of Redgauntlet? He was highly valued at Lonon court, wi' the King's ain sword; and being a red-prelatist, he came down here, rampaging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy (and of lunacy, for what I ken), to put down the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Redgauntlet was aye on the strong hand; and his name is kend as wide in the country as the parish house's or Tam Dalyell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave, could hide the puir hill-folk when Redgauntlet was out on the bugle and blood-hound after them, as if they had been sae mony. And troth, when they fand them, they didna mak muckle mair

ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roebuck—It was just, "Will ye the test?"—if not, "Make ready—present—fire!"—and there the recusant.

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought had a direct compact with Satan—that he was proof against steel and that bullets happed aff his buff-coat like hailstones from a hea—that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrigawns¹—and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they wared on him was, "Deil scowp wi' Redgauntlet." He wasna a bad master to his ain folk, though, and was weel ane liked by his tenants; and as for the lackies and troopers that raid wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs ca'd those killing times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at ony time.

Now you are to ken that my gudesire lived on Redgauntlet grund—they ca' the place Primrose-Knowe. We had lived on grund, and under the Redgauntlets, since the riding days, and la before. It was a pleasant bit; and I think the air is callerer and fresher there than anywhere else in the country. It's a' desir now; and I sat on the broken door-cheek three days since, and w glad I couldna see the plight the place was in; but that's a' wide the mark. There dwelt my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, a rambling rattling chiel' he had been in his young days, and could play weel the pipes; he was famous at "Hoopers and girders"—a' Cumberland couldna touch him at "Jockie Lattin"—and he had the fin finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle. The like Steenie wasna the sort that they made Whigs o'. And so he became a Tory, as they ca' it, which we now ca' Jacobites, just out of a kind of needcessity, that he might belang to some side or other. He had nae ill-will to the Whig bodies, and liked little to see the blude though, being obliged to follow Sir Robert in hunting and hoisting, watching and warding, he saw muckle mischief, and maybe did so that he couldna avoid.

Now Steenie was a kind of favourite with his master, and ken the folks about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment. Auld Dougal MacCallum, the butler, that had followed Sir Robert through gude and ill, thick and thin, pool and stream, was specially fond of the pipes, and aye my gudesire his gude word wi' the Laird; for Dougal could turn his master round his finger.

Weel, round came the Revolution, and it had like to have broken the hearts baith of Dougal and his master. But the change was a'thegether sae great as they feared, and other folk thought so. The Whigs made an unco crawling what they wad do with their auld enemies, and in special wi' Sir Robert Redgauntlet. But there were ower mony great folks dipped in the same doings, to make spick-and-span new warld. So Parliament passed it a' ower England, and Sir Robert, bating that he was held to hunting foxes instead of Covenanters, remained just the man he was.² His revel was as la

¹ A precipitous side of a mountain in Moffatdale.

² See Note H. *The Cameronians*.

his hall as weel lighted, as ever it had been, though maybe he ed the fines of the nonconformists, that used to come to stock arder and cellar; for it is certain he began to be keener about rents than his tenants used to find him before, and they behoved e prompt to the rent-day, or else the laird wasna pleased. And was sic an awsome body, that naebody cared to anger him; for oaths he swore, and the rage that he used to get into, and the s that he put on, made men sometimes think him a devil incar-

weel, my gudesire was nae manager—no that he was a very great guider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms' rent rrear. He got the first brash at Whitsunday put ower wi' fair d and piping; but when Martinmas came there was a summons n the grund-officer to come wi' the rent on a day preceese, or else nie behoved to flitt. Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he weel-freended, and at last he got the haill scraped thegither—ousand merks—the maist of it was from a neighbour they caa'd rie Lapraik—a sly tod. Laurie had walth o' gear—could hunt wi' hound and rin wi' the hare—and be Whig or Tory, saunt or sin—as the wind stood. He was a professor in this Revolution warld, he liked an orra sough of this warld, and a tune on the pipes weel igh at a by-time; and abune a', he thought he had gude security the siller he lent my gudesire ower the stocking at Primrose-we.

way trots my gudesire to Redgauntlet Castle wi' a heavy purse light heart, glad to be out of the Laird's danger. Weel, the thing he learned at the Castle was, that Sir Robert had fretted sell into a fit of the gout, because he did not appear before twelve ck. It wasna a'thegither for sake of the money, Dougal thought; because he didna like to part wi' my gudesire aff the grund. gal was glad to see Steenie, and brought him into the great oak our, and there sat the Laird his leesome lane, excepting that he beside him a great, ill-favoured jackanape, that was a special pet is; a cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, tering and yowling, and pinching, and biting folk, specially before eather, or disturbances in the state. Sir Robert caa'd it Major r, after the warlock that was burnt;¹ and few folk liked either the e or the conditions of the creature—they thought there was some- g in it by ordinar—and my gudesire was not just easy in mind n the door shut on him, and he saw himself in the room wi' nae-y but the Laird, Dougal MacCallum, and the Major, a thing that na chanced to him before.

Sir Robert sat, or, I should say, lay, in a great armed chair, wi' his d velvet gown, and his feet on a cradle; for he had baith gout gravel, and his face looked as gash and ghastrly as Satan's. Major r sat opposite to him, in a red laced coat, and the Laird's wig on ead; and aye as Sir Robert girned wi' pain, the jackanape girned like a sheep's-head between a pair of tangs—an ill-faured, fear-

¹ A celebrated wizard, executed at Edinburgh for sorcery and other crimes,

some couple they were. The Laird's buff-coat was hung on a pin behind him, and his broadsword and his pistols within reach; for keepit up the auld fashion of having the weapons ready, and a horse saddled day and night, just as he used to do when he was able to lo on horseback, and away after ony of the hill-folk he could get speings of. Some said it was for fear of the Whigs taking vengeance, but I judge it was just his auld custom—he wasna gien to fear o' thing. The rental-book, wi' its black cover and brass clasps, was lying beside him; and a book of sculduddry sangs was put betw the leaves, to keep it open at the place where it bore evidence against the Goodman of Primrose-Knowe, as behind the hand with his ma and duties. Sir Robert gave my gudesire a look, as if he would ha withered his heart in his bosom. Ye maun ken he had a way of beeing his brows, that men saw the visible mark of a horse-shoe in his forehead, deep-dinted, as if it had been stamped there.

"Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle?" said Robert. "Zounds! if you are——"

My gudesire, with as gude a countenance as he could put on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money on the table wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever. The Laird drew it to him hastily—"it all here, Steenie, man?"

"Your honour will find it right," said my gudesire.

"Here, Dougal," said the Laird, "gie Steenie a tass of brandy downstairs, till I count the siller and write the receipt."

But they werena weel out of the room, when Sir Robert gieed yelloch that garr'd the Castle rock. Back ran Dougal—in flew the livery-men—yell on yell gieed the Laird, ilk ane mair awfu' than the other. My gudesire knew not whether to stand or flee, but he ventured back into the parlour, where a' was gaun hirdy-girdie—naebody to say "come in," or "gae out." Terribly the Laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and wine to cool his throat; and Hell, hell, hell, and its flames, was aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, and when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried out it was burning; and folk say that it *did* bubble and sparkle like a seething caldron. He flung the cup at Dougal's head, and said he had gieed him blood instead of burgundy; and, sure aneugh, the lass was clotted blood aff the carpet the neist day. The Jackanape they call Major Weir, it jibbered and cried as if it was mocking its master, as my gudesire's head was like to turn—he forgot baith siller and receipt, and downstairs he banged; but as he ran, the shrieks came faint and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groan, and wae gaed through the Castle that the Laird was dead.

Weel, away came my gudesire, wi' his finger in his mouth, and the best hope was, that Dougal had seen the money-bag, and heard the Laird speak of writing the receipt. The young Laird, now Sir John, came from Edinburgh, to see things put to rights. Sir John and his father never greed weel. Sir John had been bred an advocate, and afterwards sat in the last Scots Parliament and voted for the Union, having gotten, it was thought, a rug of the compensations—if his father could have come out of his grave, he would have brained him for it on his awn hearthstane. Some thought it was easier, coun-

the auld rough Knight than the fair-spoken young ane—but of that anon.

Dougal MacCallum, poor body, neither grat nor grained, but gaed to the house looking like a corpse, but directing, as was his duty, the order of the grand funeral. Now, Dougal looked aye waur waur when night was coming, and was aye the last to gang to bed, whilk was in a little round just opposite the chamber of dais, which his master occupied while he was living, and where he now lay in state, as they caa'd it, weel-a-day! The night before the funeral Dougal could keep his awn counsel nae langer; he came down with a proud spirit, and fairly asked auld Hutcheon to sit in his room with him for an hour. When they were in the round, Dougal took a glass of brandy to himsell, and gave another to Hutcheon, and wished him all health and lang life, and said that, for himsell, he was a lang for this world; for that, every night since Sir Robert's death, his silver call had sounded from the state chamber, just as it used to do at nights in his lifetime, to call Dougal to help to turn him in his bed. Dougal said, that being alone with the dead on that floor of the tower (for naebody cared to wake Sir Robert Redgauntlet like his poor corpse), he had never daured to answer the call, but that now his conscience checked him for neglecting his duty; for, "though I break service," said MacCallum, "it shall never break my service to Sir Robert; and I will answer his next whistle, so be you will do by me, Hutcheon."

Hutcheon had nae will to the wark, but he had stood by Dougal in the rain and broil, and he wad not fail him at this pinch; so down the stairs he sat ower a stoup of brandy, and Hutcheon, who was something of a clerk, would have read a chapter of the Bible; but Dougal would have naething but a blaud of Davie Lindsay, whilk was the waur prescription.

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, surely enough the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert were blowing it, and up got the twa auld serving-men, and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which showed him the foul fiend, in his ain shape, sitting on the Laird's coffin! Owerpowered as if he had been dead. He could not tell how lang he lay in a trance at the door, but when he gathered himself, he cried on his neighbour, and getting nae answer, raised the house, when Dougal found lying dead within twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. As for the whistle, it was gaen anes and aye; but by a time was it heard at the top of the house on the bartizan, and coming through the auld chimneys and turrets where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogle-wark.

It was not long when a' was ower, and the Laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my gudesire paid the full sum that stood against him in the rental book. Weel, then, he trots to the Castle, to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking rapier by his

side, instead of the auld broadsword that had a hundred-weight steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. I have heard their communing so often tauld ower, that I almost think I was there myself, though I couldna be born at the time. (In fact, Alan, companion mimicked, with a good deal of humour, the flattering conciliating tone of the tenant's address, and the hypocritical melancholy of the Laird's reply. His grandfather, he said, had, while he spoke, his eye fixed on the rental-book, as if it were a mastiff-dog that he was afraid would spring up and bite him.)

"I wuss ye joy, sir, of the head seat, and the white loaf, and the braid lairdship. Your father was a kind man to friends and followers, muckle grace to you, Sir John, to fill his shoon—his boots, I suld say, for he seldom wore shoon, unless it were muils when he had the good ground."

"Ay, Steenie," quoth the Laird, sighing deeply, and putting a napkin to his een, "his was a sudden call, and he will be missed in the country; no time to set his house in order—weel prepared for the ward, no doubt, which is the root of the matter—but left us behind a tangled hesp to wind, Steenie.—Hem! hem! We maun go to business, Steenie; much to do, and little time to do it in."

Here he opened the fatal volume. I have heard of a thing they call Doomsday-book—I am clear it has been a rental of back-garden tenants.

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft sleekit tone of voice.—"Stephen Stevenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand—due at last term."

Stephen.—"Please your honour, Sir John, I paid it to your father."

Sir John.—"Ye took a receipt, then, doubtless, Stephen; and produce it?"

Stephen.—"Indeed I hadna time, an it like your honour; for sooner had I set down the siller, and just as his honour, Sir Robert, that's gaen, drew it till him to count it, and write out the receipt, was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him."

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye must be paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis quod* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower strictly to work with no other man."

Stephen.—"Troth, Sir John, there was naeboddy in the room but Dougal MacCallum the butler. But, as your honour kens, he has followed his auld master."

"Very unlucky again, Stephen," said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. "The man to whom ye paid the money is dead—and the man who witnessed the payment is dead too—and the siller, which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard of in the repositories. How am I to believe a' this?"

Stephen.—"I dinna ken, your honour; but there is a bit memorandum of the very coins; for, God help me! I had to borrow out of twenty purses; and I am sure that ilka man there set o' will take his grit oath for what purpose I borrowed the money."

Sir John.—"I have little doubt ye borrowed the money, Stephen. It is the payment to my father that I want to have some proof of."

Stephen.—"The siller maun be about the house, Sir John."

your honour never got it, and his honour that was canna have t wi' him, maybe some of the family may have seen it."

John.—"We will examine the servants, Stephen; that is but able."

lackey and lass, and page and groom, all denied stoutly that ad ever seen such a bag of money as my gudesire described. was waur, he had unluckily not mentioned to any living soul in his purpose of paying his rent. Ae quean had noticed some- under his arm, but she took it for the pipes.

John Redgauntlet ordered the servants out of the room, and aid to my gudesire, "Now, Steenie, ye see ye have fair play; s I have little doubt ye ken better where to find the siller than her body, I beg, in fair terms, and for your own sake, that you nd this fasherie; for, Stephen, ye maun pay or flitt." ne Lord forgie your opinion," said Stephen, driven almost to t's end—"I am an honest man."

o am I, Stephen," said his honour; "and so are all the folks in ouse, I hope. But if there be a knave amongst us, it must be t tells the story he cannot prove." He paused, and then added sternly, "If I understand your trick, sir, you want to take ad- ge of some malicious reports concerning things in this family, particularly respecting my father's sudden death, thereby to me out of the money, and perhaps take away my character, by ating that I have received the rent I am demanding.—Where suppose this money to be?—I insist upon knowing."

gudesire saw everything look so muckle against him, that he nearly desperate—however, he shifted from one foot to another, d to every corner of the room, and made no answer."

peak out, sirrah," said the Laird, assuming a look of his father's, y particular ane, which he had when he was angry—it seemed he wrinkles of his frown made that self-same fearful shape of se's shoe in the middle of his brow;—"Speak out, sir! I *will* your thoughts;—do you suppose that I have this money?"

ar be it frae me to say so," said Stephen.

o you charge any of my people with having taken it?"

wad be laith to charge them that may be innocent," said my ire; "and if there be any one that is guilty, I have nae proof." omewhere the money must be, if there is a word of truth in story," said Sir John; "I ask where you think it is—and demand ect answer?"

hell, if you *will* have my thoughts of it," said my gudesire, to extremity,—“in hell! with your father, his jackanape, and ver whistle.”

vn the stairs he ran (for the parlour was nae place for him such a word), and he heard the Laird swearing blood and ls, behind him, as fast as ever did Sir Robert, and roaring for ilie and the baron-officer.

y rode my gudesire to his chief creditor (him they caa'd e Lapraik), to try if he could make onything out of him; but he tauld his story he got but the worst word in his wame— beggar, and dyvour, were the safest terms; and to the boot of

these hard terms, Laurie brought up the auld story of his dipping hand in the blood of God's saunts, just as if a tenant could helped riding with the Laird, and that a laird like Sir Robert gauntlet. My gudesire was, by this time, far beyond the bound patience, and, while he and Laurie were at deil speed the lie was wanchancie aneugh to abuse Lapraik's doctrine as weel a man, and said things that garr'd folks' flesh grue that heard th he wasna just himsell, and he had lived wi' a wild set in his day.

At last they parted, and my gudesire was to ride hame th the wood of Pitmurkie, that is a' fou of black firs, as they say.— the wood, but the firs may be black or white for what I can tell the entry of the wood there is a wild common, and on the edge common a little lonely change-house, that was keepit then l ostler-wife, they suld hae caa'd her Tibbie Faw, and there puir St cried for a mutchkin of brandy, for he had had no refreshment haill day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him to take a bite of meat, b couldna think o't, nor would he take his foot out of the stirrup took off the brandy wholly at twa draughts, and named a to each:—the first was, the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet might he never lie quiet in his grave till he had righted his bond-tenant; and the second was, a health to Man's Enemy, would but get him back the pock of siller, or tell him what can for he saw the haill world was like to regard him as a thief cheat, and he took that waur than even the ruin of his hous hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a dark night turned the trees made it yet darker, and he let the beast take its ain through the wood; when all of a sudden, from tired and wearie it was before, the nag began to spring, and flee, and stend, th gudesire could hardly keep the saddle—Upon the whilk, a hors suddenly riding up beside him, said, "That's a mettle beast of freend; will you sell him?"—So saying, he touched the horse's with his riding-wand, and it fell into its auld heigh-ho of a stum trot. "But his spunk's soon out of him, I think," continud stranger, "and that is like mony a man's courage, that thinks b do great things till he come to the proof."

My gudesire scarce listened to this, but spurred his horse "Gude e'en to you, freend."

But it's like the stranger was ane that doesna lightly yie point; for, ride as Steenie liked, he was aye beside him at the same pace. At last my gudesire, Steenie Stecnson, grew half-a and, to say the truth, half-feared.

"What is it that ye want with me, freend?" he said. "If y robber, I have nae money; if ye be a leal man, wanting comp have nae heart to mirth or speaking; and if ye want to ken the I scarce ken it mysell."

"If you will tell me your grief," said the stranger, "I am on though I have been sair miscaa'd in the world, am the only ha helping my freends."

So my gudesire, to ease his ain heart, mair than from any h help, told him the story from beginning to end.

"It's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "but I think I can help u."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and take a lang day—I ken nae mair help on earth," said my gudesire.

"But there may be some under the earth," said the stranger. "Come, I'll be frank wi' you; I could lend you the money on bond, but you would maybe scrupple my terms. Now, I can tell you, that our auld Laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses, and the wilin'g of your family, and if you daur venture to go to see him he will give you the receipt."

My gudesire's hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humoursome chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was bauld wi' brandy, and desperate wi' distress; and he said he had courage to go to the gate of hell, and a step farther, for that receipt.—The stranger laughed.

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my father would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer courtyard, through the muckle faulding yetts, and aneath the auld portecullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as could be at Sir Robert's house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my gudesire, as seemed to him, fastened his horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning, when he used to wait on the young Sir John.

"God!" said my gudesire, "if Sir Robert's death be but a dream!" He knocked at the ha' door just as he was wont, and his auld acquaintance, Dougal MacCallum, just after his wont, too—came to open the door, and said, "Piper Steenie, are ye there, lad? Sir Robert has been crying for you."

My gudesire was like a man in a dream—he looked for the stranger, but he was gane for the time. At last he just tried to say, "Ha! Dougal Driveower, are ye living? I thought ye had been dead."

"Never fash yoursell wi' me," said Dougal, "but look to yoursell; and see ye tak naething frae onybody here, neither meat, drink, or mair, except just the receipt that is your ain."

So saying, he led the way out through halls and trances that were well kend to my gudesire, and into the auld oak parlour; and there was as much singing of profane saungs, and birling of red wine, and speaking blasphemy and sculduddry, as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blithest.

But, Lord take us in keeping, what a set of ghastly revellers they were that sat around that table!—My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane to their place, for often had he piped to the most virt in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothies, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalyell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Sir Cargill's limbs till the blude sprung; and Dunbarton Douglas,

the twice-turned traitor baith to country and king. There was Bluidy Advocate MacKenzie, who, for his worldly wit and wisdom had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks, streaming down over his laced buff-coat, and his left hand always on right spule-blade, to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made. He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed, and sung, and laughed that the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laugh passed into such wild sounds, as made my gudesire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his bones.

They that waited at the table were just the wicked serving-men and troopers, that had done their work and cruel bidding on earl's orders. There was the Lang Lad of the Nethertown, that helped to take Argyle; and the Bishop's summoner, that they called the De Rattle-bag; and the wicked guardsmen in their laced coats; and the savage Highland Amorites, that shed blood like water; and many a proud serving-man, haughty of heart and bloody of hand, cringing to the rich, and making them wickeder than they would be; grinding the poor to powder, when the rich had broken them to fragments. And mony, mony mair were coming and ganging, a' as busy in their vocation as if they had been alive.

Sir Robert Redgauntlet, in the midst of a' this fearful riot, cried wi' a voice like thunder, on Steenie Piper to come to the board-room where he was sitting; his legs stretched out before him, and swathed up with flannel, with his holster pistols aside him, while the great broad-sword rested against his chair, just as my gudesire had seen him the last time upon earth—the very cushion for the jackanapes was close to him, but the creature itself was not there—it wasna his hour, it's likely; for he heard them say as he came forward, "Is the Major come yet?" And another answered, "The jackanape will be here betimes the morn." And when my gudesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said, "Will ye piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado my father gat breath to say, that Sir John would not settle without his honour's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert—"Play us up 'Weel hoddled, Luckie!'"

Now this was a tune my gudesire learned frae a warlock, that he heard it when they were worshipping Satan at their meetings; and my gudesire had sometimes played it at the ranting suppers in Redgauntlet Castle, but never very willingly; and now he grew cauld at the very name of it, and said, for excuse, he hadna his pipes with him.

"MacCallum, ye limb of Beelzebub," said the fearfu' Sir Robert, "bring Steenie the pipes that I am keeping for him!"

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes might have served the pipers of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my gudesire a nudge as

red them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the enter was of steel, and heated to a white heat; so he had fairning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused himself in, and said, he was faint and frightened, and had not wind enough to fill the bag.

Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; "for we little else here; and it's ill speaking between a fou man and a king."

Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas to keep the King's messenger in hand, while he cut the head off Lellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle;¹ and that put Steenie and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said came neither to eat, or drink, or make minstrelsy; but simply for ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get scharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time, that he aged Sir Robert for conscience' sake—he had no power to say holy name)—and as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no es for him, but just to give him his ain.

He appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a e pocket-book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is e receipt, ye pitiful cur; and for the money, my dog-whelp of a may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

My gudesire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire, when Robert roared aloud, "Stop though, thou sack-doudling son of a re! I am not done with thee. HERE we do nothing for nothing; you must return on this very day twelvemonth, to pay your mas—he homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud, refer mysell to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him; he sunk on the earth with such a sudden shock, that he lost both th and sense.

Now lang Steenie lay there he could not tell; but when he came imsell he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet paroch—ust at the door of the family aisle, and the skutcheon of the auld ht, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morn—fog on grass and gravestane around him, and his horse was feed—quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have ght the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand, y written and signed by the auld Laird; only the last letters of ame were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden

orely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of Laird.

Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you ght me my rent?"

No," answered my gudesire, "I have not; but I have brought honour Sir Robert's receipt for it."

¹ The reader is referred for particulars to Pitcottie's History of Scotland

"How, sirrah?—Sir Robert's receipt!—You told me he had given you one."

"Will your honour please to see if that bit line is right?"

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with much attention; and at last, at the date, which my gudesire had not observed. "*From my appointed place,*" he read, "*this twenty-fifth of November*—" "What!—That is yesterday!—Villain, thou must have gone to for this!"

"I got it from your honour's father—whether he be in heaven or hell, I know not," said Steenie.

"I will delate you for a warlock to the Privy Council!" said John. "I will send you to your master, the devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!"

"I intend to delate mysell to the Presbytery," said Steenie, "and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me."

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the whole history; and my gudesire told it him from point to point, as I told it you—word for word, neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, composedly, "Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honour of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect is to have a redhot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scalding your fingers wi' a redhot chanter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I shall not know what to think of it.—But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are many enough about the old house, but I think they kitten without ceremony of bed or cradle."

"We were best ask Hutcheon," said my gudesire; "he kens all the odd corners about as weel as—another serving-man that is now dead, and that I wad not like to name."

Aweel, Hutcheon, when he was asked, told them; that a ruinous turret, lang disused, next to the clock-house, only accessible by a ladder, for the opening was on the outside, and far above the battlements, was called of old the Cat's Cradle.

"There will I go immediately," said Sir John; and he took for what purpose, Heaven kens) one of his father's pistols from the table, where they had lain since the night he died, and hastened to the battlements.

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auk and frail, and wanted ane or twa rounds. However, up got Sir John, entered at the turret door, where his body stopped the only light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him wi' a vengeance, maist dang him back ower—bang gaed the knight's pistol. Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my gudesire that stood by him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jackanape down to them, and cries that the siller fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra thing besides, that had been missing for mony a day. And Sir John, when he had ripe

ret weel, led my gudesire into the dining-parlour, and took him the hand, and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he could have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him, to make amends.

"And now, Steenie," said Sir John, "although this vision of yours, on the whole, to my father's credit, as an honest man, that he could, even after his death, desire to see justice done to a poor man like you, yet you are sensible that ill-dispositioned men might make constructions upon it, concerning his soul's health. So, I think, had better lay the hail dirdum on that ill-deedie creature, Major Sir, and say naething about your dream in the wood of Pitmurkie. You had taken ower muckle brandy to be very certain about ony-thing; and Steenie, this receipt" (his hand shook while he held it)—"it's but a queer kind of document, and we will do best, I think, to put it quietly in the fire."

"Ood, but for as queer as it is, it's a' the voucher I have for my father," said my gudesire, who was afraid, it may be, of losing the benefit of Sir Robert's discharge.

"I will bear the contents to your credit in the rental-book, and give you a discharge under my own hand," said Sir John, "and that is the spot. And, Steenie, if you can hold your tongue about this matter, you shall sit, from this term downward, at an easier rent."

"Mony thanks to your honour," said Steenie, who saw easily in that corner the wind was; "doubtless I will be conformable to all your honour's commands; only I would willingly speak wi' some powerful minister on the subject, for I do not like the sort of soundings of appointment whilk your honour's father——"

"Do not call the phantom my father!" said Sir John, interrupting him.

"Weel, then, the thing that was so like him," said my gudesire; "he spoke of my coming back to see him this time twelvemonth, and put a weight on my conscience."

"Aweel, then," said Sir John, "if you be so much distressed in mind, you may speak to our minister of the parish; he is a douce man, regards the honour of our family, and the mair that he may look for some patronage from me."

"Wi' that my father readily agreed that the receipt should be burnt, and the Laird threw it into the chimney with his ain hand. But it would not for them, though; but away it flew up the lumb, and a lang train of sparks at its tail, and a hissing noise like a squib. My grandsire gaed down to the Manse, and the minister, when he heard the story, said, it was his real opinion, that though my gudesire had gaen very far in tampering with dangerous matters, as he had refused the devil's arles (for such was the offer of food and drink), and had refused to do homage by piping at his wedding, he hoped, that if he held a circumspect walk hereafter, he could take little advantage by what was come and gane. And, indeed, my gudesire, of his ain accord, lang foreswore baith the pipes and the brandy—it was not even till the year was out, and the fatal year past, that he would so much as take the fiddle, or drink usquebaugh or tippeny.

Sir John made up his story about the jackanape as he liked his sell; and some believe till this day there was no more in the matter than the filching nature of the brute. Indeed, ye'll no hinder so to threap that it was nane o' the auld Enemy that Dougal and gudesire saw in the Laird's room, but only that wanchancy creature the Major, capering on the coffin; and that, as to the blowing on the Laird's whistle that was heard after he was dead, the filthy brute could do that as weel as the Laird himsell, if no better. But Heavenkens the truth, whilk first came out by the minister's wife, after John and her ain gudeman were baith in the moulds. And then gudesire, wha was failed in his limbs, but not in his judgment memory—at least nothing to speak of—was obliged to tell the narrative to his friends, for the credit of his good name. He might else have been charged for a warlock.¹

The shades of evening were growing thicker around us as my conductor finished his long narrative with this moral—"Ye see, birk, it is nae chancy thing to tak a stranger traveller for a guide, when you are in an uncouth land."

"I should not have made that inference," said I. "Your grandfather's adventure was fortunate for himself, whom it saved from ruin and distress; and fortunate for his landlord also, whom it prevented from committing a gross act of injustice."

"Ay, but they had baith to sup the sauce o't sooner or later," said Wandering Willie—"what was fristed wasna forgiven. Sir John died before he was much over threescore; and it was just like a moment's illness. And for my gudesire, though he departed in the fullness of life, yet there was my father, a yauld man of forty-five, laid down betwixt the stilts of his pleugh, and raise never again, and nae bairn but me, a puir sightless, fatherless, motherless creature, could neither work nor want. Things gaed weel aneugh at first for Sir Redwald Redgauntlet, the only son of Sir John, and the nephew of auld Sir Robert, and, waes me! the last of the honourable house took the farm aff our hands, and brought me into his household to have care of me. He liked music, and I had the best teachers both in England and Scotland could gie me. Mony a merry year was I with him; but waes me! he gaed out with other pretty men in the fourth year of his life—I'll say nae mair about it—My head never settled weel since I lost him; and if I say another word about it, deil a bar will I have in the heart to play the night.—Look out, my gentle chap," he said, summed in a different tone, "ye should see the lights at Brokenbottle Glen by this time."

¹ See Note K. *End of Wandering Willie's Tale.*

LETTER XII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Tam Luter was their minstrel meet,
Gude Lord as he could lance,
He play'd sae shrill, and sang sae sweet,
Till Towsie took a trance.
Auld Lightfoot there he did forleet,
And counterfeited France;
He used himself as man discreet,
And up took Morrice danse
Sae loud,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.
KING JAMES I.

I CONTINUE to scribble at length, though the subject may seem somewhat deficient in interest. Let the grace of the narrative, therefore, and the concern we take in each other's matters, make amends for its tenuity. We fools of fancy, who suffer ourselves, like Malio, to be cheated with our own visions, have nevertheless this vantage over the wise ones of the earth, that we have our whole stock of enjoyments under our own command, and can dish for ourselves an intellectual banquet with most moderate assistance from external objects. It is, to be sure, something like the feast which the Barmecide served up to Alnaschar; and we cannot expect to get upon such diet. But then, neither is there repletion nor nausea, which often succeed the grosser and more material revel. On the whole, I still pray, with the Ode to Castle Building—

“ Give me thy hope which sickens not the heart ;
Give me thy wealth which has no wings to fly ;
Give me the bliss thy visions can impart :
Thy friendship give me, warm in poverty ! ”

and so, despite thy solemn smile and sapient shake of the head, I will go on picking such interest as I can out of my trivial adventures, even though that interest should be the creation of my own fancy ; nor will I cease to inflict on thy devoted eyes the labour of perusing the scrolls in which I shall record my narrative.

My last broke off as we were on the point of descending into the
 en at Brokenburn, by the dangerous track which I had first tra-
 led *en croupe*, behind a furious horseman, and was now again to
 ve under the precarious guidance of a blind man.

It was now getting dark; but this was no inconvenience to my guide, who moved on, as formerly, with instinctive security of step, that we soon reached the bottom, and I could see lights twinkling from the cottage which had been my place of refuge on a former occasion. It was not thither, however, that our course was directed. We left the habitation of the Laird to the left, and turning down the brook, soon approached the small hamlet which had been erected at the mouth of the stream, probably on account of the convenience

which it afforded as a harbour to the fishing-boats. A large, cottage, full in our front, seemed highly illuminated; for the light not only glanced from every window and aperture in its frail walls but was even visible from rents and fractures in the roof, composed of tarred shingles, repaired in part by thatch and *divot*.

While these appearances engaged my attention, that of my companion was attracted by a regular succession of sounds, like a bonfire on the floor, mixed with a very faint noise of music, which Willie's acute organs at once recognised and accounted for, while to me it was almost inaudible. The old man struck the earth with his staff in a violent passion. "The whoreson fisher rabble! They have brought another violer upon my walk! They are such smuggler blackguards, that they must run in their very music; but I'll make them waur than any gauger in the country.—Stay—hark—it's no fiddle neither—it's the pipe and tabor bastard, Simon of Sowport, from the Nicol Forest; but I'll pipe and tabor him!—Let me hae ance the loft hand on his cravat, and ye shall see what my right will do. Come away, chap—come away, gentle chap—nae time to be picking and waling your steps." And on he passed with long and determined strides, dragging me along with him.

I was not quite easy in his company; for, now that his minis pride was hurt, the man had changed from the quiet, decorous might almost say respectable person, which he seemed while he told his tale, into the appearance of a fierce, brawling, dissolute strolch. So that when he entered the large hut, where a great number of fishers, with their wives and daughters, were engaged in eating, drinking, and dancing, I was somewhat afraid that the impatient violence of my companion might procure us an indifferent reception.

But the universal shout of welcome with which Wandering Willie was received—the hearty congratulations—the repeated "Here ye, Willie!"—"Whare hae ye been, ye blind deevil?" and the clamour upon him to pledge them—above all, the speed with which the noxious pipe and tabor were put to silence, gave the old man such effectual assurance of undiminished popularity and importance, that he once put his jealousy to rest, and changed his tone of offended dignity into one better fitted to receive such cordial greetings. Young men and women crowded round, to tell how much they were afraid of his mischance had detained him, and how two or three young fellows had set out in quest of him.

"It was nae mischance, praised be Heaven," said Willie, "but the absence of the lazy loon Rob the Rambler, my comrade, that did come to meet me on the Links; but I hae gotten a braw consort in his stead, worth a dozen of him, the unhang'd blackguard."

"And wha is't tou's gotten, Wullie, lad?" said half a score of voices, while all eyes were turned on your humble servant, who gave the best countenance he could, though not quite easy at becoming the centre to which all eyes were pointed.

"I ken him by his hemmed cravat," said one fellow; "it's Hobson, the souple tailor frae Burgh.—Ye are welcome to Scotland, ye prick-the-clout loon," he said, thrusting forth a paw much more in colour of a badger's back, and of most portentous dimensions.

Gil Hobson? Gil whoreson!" exclaimed Wandering Willie; "a gentle chap that I judge to be an apprentice wi' auld Joshua Addes, to the quaker-trade."

What trade be's that man?" said he of the badger-coloured fist. "Canting and lying,"—said Willie, which produced a thundering laugh; "but I am teaching the callant a better trade, and that is, singing and fiddling."

Willie's conduct in thus announcing something like my real character, was contrary to compact; and yet I was rather glad he did for the consequence of putting a trick upon these rude and ferocious men, might, in case of discovery, have been dangerous to us both, and I was at the same time delivered from the painful effort to support a fictitious character. The good company, except perhaps one or two of the young women, whose looks expressed some desire for a better acquaintance, gave themselves no farther trouble about me; while the seniors resumed their places near an immense bowl, rather reeking caldron of brandy-punch, the younger arranged themselves on the floor, and called loudly on Willie to strike up.

With a brief caution to me, to "mind my credit, for fishers have none, though fish have none," Willie led off in capital style, and I bowed, certainly not so as to disgrace my companion, who every now and then gave me a nod of approbation. The dances were, of course, the Scottish jigs, and reels, and "twasome dances," with a pishpish or hornpipe for interlude; and the want of grace on the part of the performers was amply supplied by truth of ear, vigour of decision of step, and the agility proper to the northern performers. My own spirits rose with the mirth around me, and with old Willie's admirable execution, and frequent "weel dune, gentle chap,"—and, to confess the truth, I felt a great deal more pleasure in this rustic revel than I have done at the more formal balls and concerts in your famed city, to which I have sometimes made my way. Perhaps this was because I was a person of more importance to the presiding matron of Brokenburn-foot, than I had the means of rendering myself to the far-famed Miss Nickie Murray, the patroness of our Edinburgh assemblies. The person I mean was a buxom dame about thirty, her fingers loaded with many a silver ring, and three or four of gold; her ankles liberally displayed from under her numerous, blue, white, and scarlet short petticoats, and attired in hose of the finest and whitest lamb's-wool, which arose from shoes of Spanish dwain, fastened with silver buckles. She took the lead in my hour, and declared, "that the brave young gentleman should not bury himself to death wi' playing, but take the floor for a dance or two."

And what's to come of me, Dame Martin?" said Willie.

Come o' thee?" said the dame; "mischanter on the auld beard ye! ye could play for twenty hours on end, and tire out the haill country-side wi' dancing before ye laid down your bow, saving for a drink or the like o' that."

In troth, dame," answered Willie, "ye are no sae far wrang; sae, my comrade is to take his dance, ye maun gie me my drink, and a bob it away like Madge of Middlebie."

The drink was soon brought; but while Willie was partaking of a party entered the hut, which arrested my attention at once, intercepted the intended gallantry with which I had proposed to send my hand to the fresh-coloured, well-made, white-ankled The who had obtained me manumission from my musical task.

This was nothing less than the sudden appearance of the old woman whom the Laird had termed Mabel; Cristal Nixon, his male attendant, and the young person who had said grace to us when I supped with

This young person—Alan, thou art in thy way a bit of a conjurer—this young person whom I *did not* describe, and whom you, for very reason, suspected was not an indifferent object to me—is, I am sorry to say it, in very fact not so much so as in prudence she ought to be. I will not use the name of *love* on this occasion; for I have applied it too often to transient whims and fancies to escape your satire, she will venture to apply it now. For it is a phrase, I must confess, which I have used—a romancer would say, profaned—a little too often, considering how few years have passed over my head. But serious as the fair chaplain of Brokenburn has been often in my head when he had no business there; and if this can give thee any clew for explaining my motives in lingering about the country, and assuming the character of Willie's companion, why, hang thee, thou art welcome to make use of it—a permission for which thou need'st not thank me much, as thou wouldst not have failed to assume it, whether it was given or no.

Such being my feelings, conceive how they must have been excited when, like a beam upon a cloud, I saw this uncommonly beautiful girl enter the apartment in which they were dancing; not, however, with the air of an equal, but that of a superior, come to grace the presence the festival of her dependants. The old man and woman attended, with looks as sinister as hers were lovely, like two of the worst winter months waiting upon the bright-eyed May.

When she entered—wonder if thou wilt—she wore a *green mantle* such as thou hast described as the garb of thy fair client, and confirmed what I had partly guessed from thy personal description, that the chaplain and thy visitor were the same person. There was an animation on her brow the instant she recognised me. She gave her hand to her female attendant, and, after a momentary hesitation, as inquiring certain whether to advance or retire, she walked into the room with dignity and composure, all making way, the men unbonneting, the women curtsying respectfully, as she assumed a chair which was reverently placed for her accommodation, apart from others.

There was then a pause, until the bustling mistress of the ceremonies, with awkward but kindly courtesy, offered the young man a glass of wine, which was at first declined, and at length only then accepted, that, bowing round to the festive company, the fair woman wished them all health and mirth, and just touching the brim of her lip, replaced it on the salver. There was another pause; I did not immediately recollect, confused as I was by this unexpected apparition, that it belonged to me to break it. At length a murmur was heard around me, being expected to exhibit,—nay, to lead the dance,—in consequence of the previous conversation.

"Deil's in the fiddler lad," was muttered from more quarters than e—"saw folk ever sic a thing as a shamefaced fiddler before?" At length a venerable Triton, seconding his remonstrances with aarty thump on my shoulder, cried out, "To the floor—to the floor, d let us see how ye can fling—the lasses are a' waiting." Up I jumped, sprung from the elevated station which constituted r orchestra, and, arranging my ideas as rapidly as I could, advanced the head of the room, and, instead of offering my hand to the white-tped Thetis aforesaid, I venturously made the same proposal to her the Green Mantle.

The nymph's lovely eyes seemed to open with astonishment at the dacity of this offer; and, from the murmurs I heard around me also understood that it surprised, and perhaps offended, the by-unders. But after the first moment's emotion, she wreathed her ck, and drawing herself haughtily up, like one who was willing to ow that she was sensible of the full extent of her own condescen-on, extended her hand towards me, like a princess gracing a squire low degree.

There is affectation in all this, thought I to myself, if the Green antle has borne true evidence—for young ladies do not make visits, write letters to counsel learned in the law, to interfere in the otions of those whom they hold as cheap as this nymph seems to e me; and if I am cheated by a resemblance of cloaks, still I am terested to show myself, in some degree, worthy of the favour she s granted with so much state and reserve. The dance to be per-med was the old Scots Jigg, in which you are aware I used to play o sorry figure at La Pique's, when thy clumsy movements used to e rebuked by raps over the knuckles with that great professor's ddestick. The choice of the tune was left to my comrade Willie, o, having finished his drink, feloniously struck up the well-known d popular measure,

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker."

n astounding laugh arose at my expense, and I should have been niliated, but that the smile which mantled on the lip of my part-er, had a different expression from that of ridicule, and seemed to y, "Do not take this to heart." And I did not, Alan—my partner nced admirably, and I like one who was determined, if outshone, hich I could not help, not to be altogether thrown into the shade. I assure you our performance, as well as Willie's music, deserved ore polished spectators and auditors; but we could not then have en greeted with such enthusiastic shouts of applause as attended, hile I handed my partner to her seat, and took my place by her de, as one who had a right to offer the attentions usual on such an eason. She was visibly embarrassed, but I was determined not to observe her confusion, and to avail myself of the opportunity of learn-g whether this beautiful creature's mind was worthy of the casket hich nature had lodged it.

Nevertheless, however courageously I formed this resolution, you annot but too well guess the difficulties I must needs have felt in

carrying it into execution; since want of habitual intercourse with the charmers of the other sex has rendered me a sheepish cur, or one grain less awkward than thyself. Then, she was so very beautiful, and assumed an air of so much dignity, that I was like to under the fatal error of supposing she should only be addressed with something very clever; and in the hasty raking which my brain underwent in this persuasion, not a single idea occurred that common sense did not reject as fustian on the one hand, or weary, flat, and stale triticism on the other. I felt as if my understanding was no longer my own, but was alternately under the dominion of Aliborontiphoscophornio, and that of his facetious friend Rigdum-Fenidos. How did I envy at that moment our friend Jack Oliver, who produces with such happy complacence his fardel of small talk, and who, as he never doubts his own powers of affording amusement, passes them current with every pretty woman he approaches, and fills up the intervals of chat by his complete acquaintance with the exercise of the fan, the *façon*, and the other duties of the *Cavalier serviente*. Some of these I attempted, but I suppose it was awkwardly; at least the Lady Greenmantle received them as a prince accepts the homage of a clown.

Meantime the floor remained empty, and as the mirth of the gathering was somewhat checked, I ventured, as a dernier resort, to propose a minuet. She thanked me, and told me haughtily enough, "she was here to encourage the harmless pleasures of these good folks, but was not disposed to make an exhibition of her own inferior dancing for their amusement."

She paused a moment, as if she expected me to suggest something; and as I remained silent and rebuked, she bowed her head more graciously, and said, "Not to affront you, however, a country dance, if you please."

What an ass was I, Alan, not to have anticipated her wish! Should I not have observed that the ill-favoured couple, Mabel and Cristal, had placed themselves on each side of her seat, like the supporters of the royal arms? the man, thick, short, shaggy, and hirsute as the lion; the female, skin-dried, tight-laced, long, lean, and hungry-faced, like the unicorn. I ought to have recollected that under the close inspection of two such watchful salvages, our communication, while in repose, could not have been easy; that the period of dancing a minuet was not the very choicest time for conversation; but that the noise, the exercise, and the mazy confusion of a country-dance, where the inexperienced performers were ever now and then running against each other, and compelling the other couples to stand still for a minute at a time, besides the more regular repose afforded by the intervals of the dance itself, gave the best possible openings for a word or two spoken in season, and without being liable to observation.

We had but just led down, when an opportunity of the kind occurred, and my partner said, with great gentleness and modesty, "It is not perhaps very proper in me to acknowledge an acquaintance that is not claimed; but I believe I speak to Mr Darsie Lamer?"

Darsie Latimer was indeed the person that had now the honour happiness—

would have gone on in the false gallop of compliment, but she was short. "And why," she said, "is Mr Latimer here, and in disguise, or at least assuming an office unworthy of a man of education—I beg pardon," she continued,—“I would not give you pain, surely making an associate of a person of that description——” He looked towards my friend Willie, and was silent. I felt deeply ashamed of myself, and hastened to say it was an idle fancy, which want of occupation had suggested, and which I could regret, since it had procured me the pleasure I at present enjoyed.

Without seeming to notice my compliment she took the next opportunity to say, "Will Mr Latimer permit a stranger who wishes to ask, whether it is right that, at his active age, he should be so far void of occupation as to be ready to adopt low society for the sake of idle amusement?"

"You are severe, madam," I answered; but I cannot think myself degraded by mixing with any society where I meet——"

Here I stopped short, conscious that I was giving my answer an awkward turn. The *argumentum ad hominem*, the last to which a polite man has recourse, may, however, be justified by circumstances, but seldom or never the *argumentum ad fœminam*.

It filled up the blank herself which I had left. "Where you meet I suppose you would say? But the case is different. I am, by my unhappy fate, obliged to move by the will of others, and to visit places which I would by my own will gladly avoid. Besides, I am except for these few minutes, no participator of the revels—a spectator only, and attended by my servants. Your situation is different—you are here by choice, the partaker and minister of the pleasures of a class below you in education, birth, and fortunes. If I speak harshly, Mr Latimer," she added, with much sweetness of manner, "I mean kindly."

I was confounded by her speech, "severe in youthful wisdom;" all gaiety or lively, suitable to such a dialogue, vanished from my recollection, and I answered with gravity like her own, "I am, indeed, more educated than these poor people; but you, madam, whose admonition I am grateful for, must know more of my condition than I do myself—I dare not say I am their superior in birth, since I have nothing of my own, or in fortunes, over which hangs an impenetrable cloud."

"And why should your ignorance on these points drive you into low society and idle habits;" answered my female monitor. "Is it necessary to wait till fortune cast her beams upon you, when, by exerting your own energy, you might distinguish yourself?—Do not let your pursuits of learning lie open to you—of manly ambition—of war?—No—not of war, that has already cost you too dear."

"It will be what you wish me to be," I replied with eagerness—"I have but to choose my path, and you shall see if I do not pursue it with energy, were it only because you command me."

"Not because I command you," said the maiden, "but because

reason, common sense, manhood, and, in one word, regard for own safety, give the same counsel."

"At least permit me to reply, that reason and sense never assume a fairer form—of persuasion," I hastily added; for she turned to me—nor did she give me another opportunity of continuing what I had to say till the next pause of the dance, when, determined to bring our dialogue to a point, I said, "You mentioned manhood, and in the same breath, personal danger. My ideas of manhood suggest that it is cowardice to retreat before dangers of a doubtful character. You, who appear to know so much of my fortunes, I might call you my guardian angel, tell me what these dangers are, that I may judge whether manhood calls on me to face or to shun them."

She was evidently perplexed by this appeal.

"You make me pay dearly for acting as your humane adviser," replied at last: "I acknowledge an interest in your fate, and I dare not tell you whence it arises; neither am I at liberty to say why, or from whom, you are in danger; but it is not less true that danger is near and imminent. Ask me no more, but, for your own sake begone from this country. Elsewhere you are safe—here I do but invite your fate."

"But, am I doomed to bid thus farewell to almost the only being who has showed an interest in my welfare?—Do not say that we shall meet again, and the hope shall be the leading motive to regulate my course!"

"It is more than probable," she said—"much more than probable that we may never meet again. The help which I now render is all that may be in my power; it is such as I should render to a blind man whom I might observe approaching the verge of a precipice; it ought to excite no surprise, and requires no gratitude."

So saying, she again turned from me, nor did she address me till the dance was on the point of ending, when she said, "Do not attempt to speak to, or approach me again in the course of the night; bid the company as soon as you can, but not abruptly, and God bless you."

I handed her to her seat, and did not quit the fair palm without expressing my feelings by a gentle pressure. She complied slightly, and withdrew her hand, but not angrily. Seeing that of Cristal and Mabel sternly fixed on me, I bowed deeply, and drew from her; my heart saddening, and my eyes becoming watery in spite of me, as the shifting crowd hid us from each other.

It was my intention to have crept back to my comrade Will, and resumed my bow with such spirit as I might, although, for the moment, I would have given half my income for an instant of solitude. But my retreat was cut off by Dame Martin, with the same address—if it is not an inconsistent phrase—of rustic coquetry goes straight up to the point.

"Ay, lad, ye seem unca sune weary, to dance sae lightly? the nag that ambles a' the day, than him that makes a brattin' mile, and then's dune wi' the road."

This was a fair challenge, and I could not decline accept

des, I could see Dame Martin was queen of the revels; and so y were the rude and singular figures about me, that I was by no ns certain whether I might not need some protection. I seized er willing hand, and we took our places in the dance, where, if I not acquit myself with all the accuracy of step and movement h I had before attempted, I at least came up to the expectations y partner, who said, and almost swore, "I was prime at it;" while, ulated to her utmost exertions, she herself frisked like a kid, ped her fingers like castanets, whooped like a Bacchanal, and nded from the floor like a tennis-ball,—ay, till the colour of her ers was no particular mystery. She made the less secret of this, aps, that they were sky-blue, and fringed with silver.

he time has been that this would have been special fun; or rather, ight was the only time I can recollect these four years when it ld *not* have been so; yet, at this moment, I cannot tell you how I ed to be rid of Dame Martin. I almost wished she would sprain of those "many-twinkling" ankles, which served her so alertly; when, in the midst of her exuberant caprioling, I saw my former ner leaving the apartment, and with eyes, as I thought, turning ards me, this unwillingness to carry on the dance increased to a point, that I was almost about to feign a sprain or a dislocation elf, in order to put an end to the performance. But there were and me scores of old women, all of whom looked as if they might e some sovereign recipe for such an accident; and, remembering Blas and his pretended disorder in the robbers' cavern, I thought wise to play Dame Martin fair, and dance till she thought proper dismiss me. What I did I resolved to do strenuously, and in the er part of the exhibition I cut and sprang from the floor as high as perpendicularly as Dame Martin herself; and received, I pro e you, thunders of applause, for the common people always prefer rtion and agility to grace. At length Dame Martin could dance nore, and, rejoicing at my release, I led her to a seat, and took privilege of a partner to attend her.

Heh, sirs!" exclaimed Dame Martin, "I am sair forfoughen! th, callant, I think ye hae been amaiest the death o' me."

could only atone for the alleged offence by fetching her some re- hment, of which she readily partook.

I have been lucky in my partners," I said, "first that pretty young y, and then you, Mrs Martin."

Hout wi' your fleecing," said Dame Martin. "Gae wa—gae wa, ; dinna blaw in folk's lugs that gate; me and Miss Liliass even'd gither! Na, na, lad—od, she is maybe four or five years younger n the like o' me,—by and attour her gentle havings."

She is the Laird's daughter?" said I, in as careless a tone of in- ry as I could assume.

His daughter, man? Na, na, only his niece—and sib aneugh to , I think."

Ay, indeed," I replied; "I thought she had borne his name?"

She bears her ain name, and that's Liliass."

And has she no other name?" asked I.

What needs she another till she gets a gudeman?" answered my

Thetis, a little miffed perhaps—to use the women's phrase—turned the conversation upon my former partner, rather than dressed it to herself.

There was a little pause, which was interrupted by Dame Ma observing, "They are standing up again."

"True," said I, having no mind to renew my late violent *caprice* "and I must go help old Willie."

Ere I could extricate myself, I heard poor Thetis address her to a sort of Mer-man in a jacket of seamen's blue, and a pair of trowsers (whose hand, by the way, she had rejected at an earlier part of the evening), and intimate that she was now disposed to take a trip.

"Trip away, then, dearie," said the vindictive man of the water, without offering his hand; "there," pointing to the floor, "is a roomy berth for you."

Certain I had made one enemy, and perhaps two, I hastened to my original seat beside Willie, and began to handle my bow. But I perceived that my conduct had made an unfavourable impression; words, "flory conceited chap,"—"hafflins gentle," and at length the still more alarming epithet of "spy," began to be buzzed about. I was heartily glad when the apparition of Sam's visage at the door, who was already possessed of and draining a can of punch, gave me assurance that my means of retreat were at hand. I intimate the matter much to Willie, who probably had heard more of the murmurs of the company than I had; for he whispered, "Ay, ay,—awa wi' ye—slide lang here—slide out canny—dinna let them see ye are on the track."

I slipped half-a-guinea into the old man's hand, who answered, "Truts! pruts! nonsense! but I'se no refuse, trusting ye can afford it.—Awa wi' ye—and if onybody stops ye, cry on me."

I glided, by his advice, along the room as if looking for a partner, and joined Sam, whom I disengaged with some difficulty from his conversation, and we left the cottage together in a manner to attract the least possible observation. The horses were tied in a neighbouring shed as the moon was up, and I was now familiar with the road, broad and complicated as it is, we soon reached the Shepherd's Bush, where the old landlady was sitting up waiting for us, under some anxious mind, to account for which she did not hesitate to tell me that the folks had gone to Brokenburn from her house, or neighbouring towns, that did not come so safe back again. "Wandering Willie," she said, "was doubtless a kind of protection."

Here Willie's wife who was smoking in the chimney corner, began up the praises of her "hinny," as she called him, and endeavoured to awaken my generosity afresh, by describing the dangers from which she was pleased to allege, her husband's countenance had assuredly been the means of preserving me. I was not, however, to be trifled with out of more money at this time, and went to bed in haste, full of various cogitations.

I have since spent a couple of days betwixt Mount Sharon and the place, and betwixt reading, writing to thee this momentous business, forming plans for seeing the lovely Liliās, and—partly, I think, for the sake of contradiction—angling a little in spite of Joshua's scruples.

ough I am rather liking the amusement better as I begin to have success in it.

and now, my dearest Alan, you are in full possession of my secret and me as frankly into the recesses of your bosom. How do you look towards this fair *ignis fatuus*—this lily of the desert? Tell me honestly; for however the recollection of her may haunt my own mind, my love for Alan Fairford surpasses the love of woman. I know too that, when you *do* love, it will be to

“Love once and love no more.”

deep-consuming passion, once kindled in a breast so steady as mine, would never be extinguished but with life. I am of another nature, more volatile temper, and though I shall open your next with a trembling hand, and uncertain heart, yet let it bring a frank confession—that this fair unknown has made a deeper impression on your mind than you reckoned for, and you will see I can tear the arrow from my own wound, barb and all. In the mean time, though I have hatched schemes once more to see her, I will, you may rely on it, take no step for putting them into practice. I have refrained from this hitherto, and I give you my word of honour, I shall continue to do so. Yet why should you need any farther assurance from one who is entirely yours as
D. L.?

S.—I shall be on thorns till I receive your answer. I read and reread your letter, and cannot for my soul discover what your real intentions are. Sometimes I think you write of her as one in jest and sometimes I think that cannot be. Put me at ease as soon as possible.

LETTER XIII.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

WRITE on the instant, as you direct; and in a tragi-comic humour, I have a tear in my eye, and a smile on my cheek. Dearest Darsie, sure never a being but yourself could be so generous—sure never a being but yourself could be so absurd! I remember when you were a boy you wished to make your fine new whip a present to old Peggy, merely because she admired it; and now, with like unreflecting and inappropriate liberality, you would resign your beloved smoke-dried young sophister, who cares not one of the hairs of his head, if it is his occupation to split, for all the daughters of Eve. I inquired of your Liliac—your Green-mantle—your unknown enchantress—why, I scarce saw her for five minutes, and even then only the tip of her chin was distinctly visible. She was well made, and the tip of her chin was of a most promising cast for the rest of her face; but, heaven save you! she came upon business! and for a lawyer to fall in love with a pretty client on a single consultation, would be as wise as for a man to become enamoured of a particularly bright sunbeam which

chanced for a moment to gild his bar-wig. I give you my word, heart-whole; and moreover, I assure you that, before I suffer a wound to sit near my heart's core, I must see her full face, without mantle, ay, and know a good deal of her mind into the bargain. never fret yourself on my account, my kind and generous Da but, for your own sake, have a care, and let not an idle attachment so lightly taken up, lead you into serious danger.

On this subject I feel so apprehensive, that now, when I am decorated with the honours of the gown, I should have abandoned my career at the very starting to come to you, but for my father who contrived to clog my heels with fetters of a professional nature. I will tell you the matter at length, for it is comical enough; and should not you list to my juridical adventures, as well as I to the your fiddling knight-errantry?

It was after dinner, and I was considering how I might best introduce to my father the private resolution I had formed to set off for Dumfriesshire, or whether I had not better run away at once and plead my excuse by letter, when, assuming the peculiar look which he communicates any of his intentions respecting me, the doctor suspects may not be altogether acceptable, "Alan," he said, "ye wear a gown—ye have opened shop, as we would say of a more mechanical profession; and doubtless, ye think the floor of the court strowed with guineas, and that ye have only to stoop down to get them?"

"I hope I am sensible, sir," I replied, "that I have some knowledge and practice to acquire, and must stoop for that in the first place."

"It is well said," answered my father; and, always afraid to give too much encouragement, added, "Very well said, if it be well up to—Stoop to get knowledge and practice is the very word I know very well, Alan, that in the other faculty who study the *medendi*, before the young doctor gets to the bedsides of palaces, must, as they call it, walk the hospitals; and cure Lazarus sores, before he be admitted to prescribe for Dives, when he has gout or indigestion——"

"I am aware, sir, that——"

"Whisht—do not interrupt the court—Well—also the chirurgeons have an useful practice, by which they put their apprentices at work upon senseless dead bodies, to which, as they can do no good, so they certainly can do as little harm; while at the same time the *tyro*, or apprentice, gains experience, and becomes able to whip off a leg or arm from a living subject, as cleanly as ye can slice an onion."

"I believe I guess your meaning, sir," answered I; "and I am not for a very particular engagement——"

"Do not speak to me of engagements; but whisht—then the good lad—and do not interrupt the court."

My father, you know, is apt—be it said with all filial duty—to be a little prolix in his harrangues. I had nothing for it but to hold my back and listen.

"Maybe you think, Alan, because I have, doubtless, the management of some actions in dependence, whilk my worthy client

sted me with, that I may think of airing them your way *instantly*—and so setting you up in practice, so far as my small business fluence may go; and doubtless, Alan, that is a day whilk I hope come round. But then, before I give, as the proverb hath it, 'own fish-guts to my own sea-maws,' I must, for the sake of my character, be very sure that my sea-maw can pick them to some use. What say ye?"

"I am so far," answered I, "from wishing to get early into practice, that I would willingly bestow a few days——"

"In farther study, ye would say, Alan. But that is not the way—ye must walk the hospitals—ye must cure Lazarus—ye must and carve on a departed subject, to show your skill."

"I am sure," I replied, "I will undertake the cause of any poor with pleasure, and bestow as much pains upon it as if it were a peer's; but for the next two or three days——"

"They must be devoted to close study, Alan—very close study indeed; for ye must stand primed for a hearing, in *presentia Domino*—upon Tuesday next."

"Yes, sir?" I replied in astonishment—"I have not opened my mouth in the Outer-House yet!"

"Never mind the Court of the Gentiles, man," said my father; "I will have you into the Sanctuary at once—over shoes, over shoes."

"But, sir, I should really spoil any cause thrust on me so hastily."

"Ye cannot spoil it, Alan," said my father, rubbing his hands with complacency; "that is the very cream of the business, man—just, as I said before, a subject upon whilk all the *tyrones* have been trying their whittles for fifteen years; and as there have been at ten or a dozen agents concerned, and each took his own way, it has come to that pass, that Stair or Arniston could not mend it, and I do not think even you, Alan, can do it much harm—ye may lose credit by it, but ye can lose none."

"And pray what is the name of my happy client, sir?" said I, unconsciously enough, I believe.

"It is a well-known name in the Parliament-House," replied my father. "To say the truth, I expect him every moment; it is Peter Peebles."¹

"Peter Peebles!" exclaimed I, in astonishment; "he is an insane man—as poor as Job, and as mad as a March hare!"

"He has been pleading in the court for fifteen years," said my father, with a tone of commiseration, which seemed to acknowledge that this was enough to account for the poor man's condition, both in his mind and circumstances.

"Besides, sir," I added, "he is on the Poor's Roll; and you know that we are advocates regularly appointed to manage those cases; and it is not to presume to interfere——"

"Whisht, Alan!—never interrupt the court—all *that* is managed like a tee'd ball" (my father sometimes draws his similes from his once favourite game of golf);—"you must know, Alan, that

¹ See Note L. *Peter Peebles*.

Peter's cause was to have been opened by young Dumtoustie may ken the lad, a son of Dumtoustie of that ilk, member of Parliament for the county of—, and a nephew of the Laird's young brother, worthy Lord Bladderskate, whilk ye are aware soun like being akin to a peatship¹ and a sherifffdom, as a sieve is sib riddle. Now, Saunders Drudgeit, my lord's clerk, came to me morning in the House, like ane bereft of his wits; for it seems young Dumtoustie is ane of the Poor's Lawyers, and Peter Peebles' process had been remitted to him of course. But so soon a hare-brained goose saw the pokes² (as, indeed, Alan, they are of the least), he took fright, called for his nag, lap on, and aw the country is he gone; and so, said Saunders, my lord is at his end wi' vexation and shame, to see his nevoy break off the court the very starting. 'I'll tell you, Saunders,' said I, 'were I my lord's friend or kinsman of mine should leave the town whilk the court was sitting, that kinsman, or be what he liked, should darken my door again.' And then, Alan, I thought to turn the matter our own way; and I said that you were a gey sharp birkie, ju the irons, and if it would oblige my lord, and so forth, you v open Peter's cause on Tuesday, and make some handsome ap for the necessary absence of your learned friend, and the loss v your client and the court had sustained, and so forth. Saunders at the proposition, like a cock at a grossart; for, he said, the chance was to get a new hand, that did not ken the charge h taking upon him; for there was not a lad of two Session's stat that was not dead-sick of Peter Peebles and his cause; and l vised me to break the matter gently to you at the first; but l him you were a good bairn, Alan, and had no will and pleas these matters but mine."

What could I say, Darsie, in answer to this arrangement, so well meant—so very vexatious, at the same time?—To imitate the defection and flight of young Dumtoustie, was at once to destroy my father's hopes of me for ever; nay, such is the keenness with which he regards all connected with his profession, it might have been to breaking his heart. I was obliged, therefore, to bow in sad acceptance, when my father called to James Wilkinson to bring the bits of pokes he would find on his table.

Exit James, and presently re-enters, bending under the load of huge leathern bags, full of papers to the brim, and labelled on greasy backs with the magic impress of the clerks of court, a title, *Peebles against Plainstones*. This huge mass was deposited on the table, and my father, with no ordinary glee in his countenance, began to draw out the various bundles of papers, secured by your red tape or whipcord, but stout, substantial casts of iron rope, such as might have held small craft at their moorings.

I made a last and desperate effort to get rid of the impending storm. "I am really afraid, sir, that this case seems so much compli-

¹ Formerly, a lawyer, supposed to be under the peculiar patronage of any particular judge, was invidiously termed his *peat* or *pet*.

² Process-bags.

there is so little time to prepare, that we had better move the
t to supersede it till next Session."

Now, sir?—how, Alan?" said my father—"Would you approbate
reprobate, sir?—You have accepted the poor man's cause, and
u have not his fee in your pocket, it is because he has none to
you; and now would you approbate and reprobate in the same
h of your mouth?—Think of your oath of office, Alan, and your
to your father, my dear boy."

nce more, what could I say?—I saw from my father's hurried
alarmed manner, that nothing could vex him so much as failing
e point he had determined to carry, and once more intimated
eadiness to do my best, under every disadvantage.

Vell, well, my boy," said my father, "the Lord will make your
long in the land, for the honour you have given to your father's
hairs. You may find wiser advisers, Alan, but none that can
you better."

y father, you know, does not usually give way to expressions of
tion, and they are interesting in proportion to their rarity. My
began to fill at seeing his glisten; and my delight at having
n him such sensible gratification would have been unmixed but
he thoughts of you. These out of the question, I could have
pled with the bags, had they been as large as corn-sacks. But,
rn what was grave into farce, the door opened, and Wilkinson
red in Peter Peebles.

ou must have seen this original, Darsie, who, like others in the
e predicament, continues to haunt the courts of justice, where
as made shipwreck of time, means, and understanding. Such
ne paupers have sometimes seemed to me to resemble wrecks
g upon the shoals on the Goodwin Sands, or in Yarmouth Roads,
uing other vessels to keep aloof from the banks on which they
e been lost; or rather, such ruined clients are like scarecrows
potato-bogles, distributed through the courts to scare away
s from the scene of litigation.

he identical Peter wears a huge great-coat, threadbare and
hed itself, yet carefully so disposed and secured by what buttons
uin, and many supplementary pins, as to conceal the still more
m state of his under-garments. The shoes and stockings of a
ghman were, however, seen to meet at his knees with a pair of
uish, blackish breeches; a rusty-coloured handkerchief, that
been black in its day, surrounded his throat, and was an apology
inen. His hair, half grey, half black, escaped in elf-locks around
ge wig, made of tow, as it seemed to me, and so much shrunk
it stood up on the very top of his head; above which he plants,
a covered, an immense cocked hat, which, like the chieftain's
er in an ancient battle, may be seen any sederunt day betwixt
and ten, high towering above all the fluctuating and changeful
e in the Outer-House, where his eccentricities often made him
centre of a group of petulant and teasing boys, who exercise
him every art of ingenious torture. His countenance, origi-
that of a portly, comely burgher, is now emaciated with poverty
anxiety, and rendered wild by an insane lightness about the eyes;

a withered and blighted skin and complexion; features begrimed with snuff, charged with the self-importance peculiar to insanity; a habit of perpetually speaking to himself. Such was my fortunate client; and I must allow, Darsie, that my profession had need to do a great deal of good, if, as is much to be feared, it brings many individuals to such a pass.

After we had been, with a good deal of form, presented to the other, at which time I easily saw by my father's manner that he was desirous of supporting Peter's character in my eyes, as much as the circumstances would permit, "Alan," he said, "this is the gentleman who has agreed to accept you as his counsel, in place of young Dumtoustie."

"Entirely out of favour to my old acquaintance your father," said Peter, with a benign and patronising countenance, "out of respect to your father, and my old intimacy with Lord Bladderskate. Otherwise, by the *Regiam Majestatem*! I would have presented a petition and complaint against Daniel Dumtoustie, Advocate, by name and surname—I would, by all the practiques!—I know the form of the process; and I am not to be trifled with."

My father here interrupted my client, and reminded him that there was a good deal of business to do, as he proposed to give the young counsel an outline of the state of the conjoined process, with a view to letting him into the merits of the cause, disencumbered from technical points of form. "I have made a short abbreviate, Mr Peebles," said he; "having sat up late last night, and employed much of this morning wading through these papers, to save Alan some trouble, and I am now about to state the result."

"I will state it myself," said Peter, breaking in without reverence upon his solicitor.

"No, by no means," said my father; "I am your agent for the time."

"Mine eleventh in number," said Peter; "I have a new one every year; I wish I could get a new coat as regularly."

"Your agent for the time," resumed my father; "and you, being acquainted with the forms, know that the client states the case to the agent—the agent to the counsel——"

"The counsel to the Lord Ordinary," continued Peter, once again going, like the peal of an alarm clock, "the Ordinary to the Lord House, the President to the Bench. It is just like the rope to the man, the man to the ox, the ox to the water, the water to the fire."

"Hush, for Heaven's sake, Mr Peebles," said my father, cutting his recitation short; "time wears on—we must get to business—we must not interrupt the court, you know.—Hem, hem! From the abbreviate it appears——"

"Before you begin," said Peter Peebles, "I'll thank you to give me a morsel of bread and cheese, or some cauld meat, or brose, or the like alimentary provision; I was so anxious to see you that I could not eat a mouthful of dinner."

Heartily glad, I believe, to have so good a chance of stopping my client's mouth effectually, my father ordered some cold meat, which James Wilkinson, for the honour of the house, was about

the brandy bottle, which remained on the sideboard, but, at a kick from my father, supplied its place with small beer. Peter devoured the provisions with the rapacity of a famished lion; and so did the diversion engage him, that though, while my father pressed the case, he looked at him repeatedly, as if he meant to interrupt his statement, yet he always found more agreeable employment in his mouth, and returned to the cold beef with an avidity which convinced me he had not had such an opportunity for many a day of satisfying his appetite. Omitting much formal phraseology, and many legal details, I will endeavour to give you, in exchange for the fiddler's tale, the history of a litigant, or rather the history of a lawsuit.

"Peter Peebles and Paul Plainstones," said my father, "entered into partnership, in the year —, as mercers and linendrapers, in Luckenbooths, and carried on a great line of business to mutual advantage. But the learned counsel needeth not to be told, *societas contrahitur discordiarum*, partnership oft makes pleaship. The company being dissolved by mutual consent, in the year —, the affairs were to be wound up, and after certain attempts to settle the matter amicably, it was at last brought into the Court, and has been carried out into several distinct processes, most of which have been decided by the Ordinary. It is to the state of these processes that my attention is particularly directed. There is the original action of Peebles *v.* Plainstones, convening him for payment of £100, less or more, as alleged balance due by Plainstones. 2dly, There is a counter action, in which Plainstones is pursuer and Peebles defender, for £2500, less or more, being balance alleged *contra*, to be due by Peebles. 3dly, Mr Peebles's seventh agent has used an action of Compt and Reckoning at his instance, wherein the balance should prove due on either side might be fairly struck and ascertained. 4thly, To meet the hypothetical case, that Peebles might be found liable in a balance to Plainstones, Mr Wildgoose, Mr Peebles's eighth agent, recommending a Multiplepounding, to bring all parties concerned into the field.

My brain was like to turn at this account of lawsuit within law—like a nest of chip-boxes, with all of which I was expected to become myself acquainted.

"I understand," I said, "that Mr Peebles claims a sum of money from Plainstones—how then can he be his debtor? and if not his debtor, how can he bring a Multiplepounding, the very summons of which sets forth, that the pursuer does owe certain monies, which he is desirous to pay by warrant of a judge?"¹

"We know little of the matter, I doubt, friend," said Mr Peebles; "Multiplepounding is the safest *remedium juris* in the whole form of process. I have known it conjoined with a declarator of marriage. Our beef is excellent," he said to my father, who in vain endeavoured to resume his legal disquisition; "but something highly powerful—and the twopenny is undeniable; but it is small swipes—

¹ Multiplepounding is, I believe, equivalent to what is called in England a case of Distress.

small swipes—more of hop than malt—with your leave, I'll try y black bottle."

My father started to help him with his own hand, and in measure; but, infinitely to my amusement, Peter got possession the bottle by the neck, and my father's ideas of hospitality were too scrupulous to permit his attempting, by any direct means redeem it; so that Peter returned to the table triumphant, with prey in his clutch.

"Better have a wine-glass, Mr Peebles," said my father, in admonitory tone, "you will find it pretty strong."

"If the kirk is ower muckle, we can sing mass in the quire," Peter, helping himself in the goblet out of which he had been drinking the small beer. "What is it, usquebaugh?—BRANDY, as I an honest man! I had almost forgotten the name and taste of brandy—Mr Fairford elder, your good health" (a mouthful of brandy)—"Mr Alan Fairford, wishing you well through your arduous undertaking" (another go-down of the comfortable liquor). "And although you have given a tolerable breviat of this great lawsuit whilk every body has heard something that has walked the boards the Outer-House (here's to ye again, by way of interim decree), ye have omitted to speak a word of the arrestments."

"I was just coming to that point, Mr Peebles."

"Or of the action of suspension of the charge on the bill."

"I was just coming to that."

"Or the advocacy of the Sheriff-Court process."

"I was just coming to it."

"As Tweed comes to Melrose, I think," said the litigant; then filling his goblet about a quarter full of brandy, as if in absence of mind, "Oh, Mr Alan Fairford, ye are a lucky man to buck up such a cause as mine at the very outset! it is like a specimen of causes, man. By the Regiam, there is not a *remedium juris* in practiques but ye'll find a spice o't. Here's to your getting through with it—Pshut—I am drinking naked spirits, I think. if the heathen be ower strong, we'll christen him with the bre (here he added a little small beer to his beverage, paused, rolled eyes, winked, and proceeded),—"Mr Fairford—the action of assault and battery, Mr Fairford, when I compelled the villain Plainstiff to pull my nose within two steps of King Charles's statue, in Parliament Close—there I had him in a hose-net. Never man could tell me how to shape that process—no counsel that ever sold could condescend and say whether it were best to proceed by writ of petition and complaint, *ad vindictam publicam*, with consent of Majesty's advocate, or by action on the statute for battery *per se*, *lite*, whilk would be the winning my plea at once, and so getting back-door out of Court.—By the Regiam, that beef and brar unco het at my heart—I maun try the ale again" (sipped a beer); "and the ale's but cauld, I maun e'en put in the rest o' brandy."

He was as good as his word, and proceeded in so loud and animated style of elocution, thumping the table, drinking and snuffing so nately, that my father, abandoning all attempts to interrupt him,

nt and ashamed, suffering, and anxious for the conclusion of the
ne.

And then to come back to my pet process of all—my battery and
ult process, when I had the good luck to provoke him to pull my
e at the very threshold of the Court, whilk was the very thing I
ted—Mr Pest, ye ken him, Daddie Fairford? Old Pest was for
king it out *hamesucken*, for he said the Court might be said—said
gh!—to be my dwelling-place. I dwell mair there than ony gate
, and the essence of hamesucken is to strike a man in his dwelling-
ce—mind that, young advocate—and so there's hope Plainstones
be hanged, as many has for a less matter; for, my Lords,—will
t say to the Justiciary bodies,—my Lords, the Parliament House is
bles's place of dwelling, says he,—being *commune forum*, and *com-*
ne forum est commune domicilium—Lass, fetch another glass of
sky, and score it—time to gae hame—by the practiques, I cannot
the jug—yet there's twa of them, I think. By the Regium,
rford—Daddie Fairford—lend us twal pennies to buy sneeshing,
e is done—Macer, call another cause.”

The box fell from his hands, and his body would at the same time
e fallen from the chair, had not I supported him.

This is intolerable,” said my father—“Call a chairman, James
kinson, to carry this degraded, worthless, drunken beast home.”
When Peter Peebles was removed from this memorable consulta-
n, under the care of an able-bodied Celt, my father hastily bundled
the papers, as a showman, whose exhibition has miscarried, hastes
remove his booth. “Here are my memoranda, Alan,” he said, in
urried way; “look them carefully over—compare them with the
cesses, and turn it in your head before Tuesday. Many a good
ech has been made for a beast of a client; and hark ye, lad, hark
—I never intended to cheat you of your fee when all was done,
ugh I would have liked to have heard the speech first; but there
nothing like corning the horse before the journey. Here are five
nd guineas in a silk purse—of your poor mother's netting, Alan—
e would have been a blithe woman to have seen her young son with
rown on his back—but no more of that—be a good boy, and to the
rk like a tiger.”

I did set to work Darsie; for who could resist such motives?
ith my father's assistance, I have mastered the details, confused as
y are; and on Tuesday I shall plead as well for Peter Peebles as
ould for a duke. Indeed, I feel my head so clear on the subject
to be able to write this long letter to you; into which, however,
ter and his lawsuit have insinuated themselves so far as to show
a how much they at present occupy my thoughts. Once more, be
eful of yourself, and mindful of me, who am ever thine, while

ALAN FAIRFORD.

From circumstances, to be hereafter mentioned, it was long ere
s letter reached the person to whom it was addressed.

CHAPTER I.

NARRATIVE.

THE advantage of laying before the reader, in the words of actors themselves, the adventures which we must otherwise have narrated in our own, has given great popularity to the publication of epistolary correspondence, as practised by various great authors and by ourselves in the preceding chapters. Nevertheless, a genuine correspondence of this kind (and Heaven forbid it should be in any respect sophisticated by interpolations of our own!) can seldom be found to contain all in which it is necessary to instruct the reader in his full comprehension of the story. Also it must often happen that various prolixities and redundancies occur in the course of an interchange of letters, which must hang as a dead weight on the progress of the narrative. To avoid this dilemma, some biographers have used the letters of the personages concerned, or liberal extracts from them, to describe particular incidents, or express the sentiments which they entertained; while they connect them occasionally with such portions of narrative as may serve to carry on the thread of the story.

It is thus that the adventurous travellers who explore the summit of Mont Blanc, now move on through the crumbling snow-drifts slowly, that their progress is almost imperceptible, and anon abridge their journey by springing over the intervening chasms which cross their path, with the assistance of their pilgrim-staves. Or, to make a briefer simile, the course of story-telling which we have for the present adopted resembles the original discipline of the dragoon, who were trained to serve either on foot or horseback, as the emergencies of the service required. With this explanation, we shall proceed to narrate some circumstances which Alan Fairford did not and could not, write to his correspondent.

Our reader, we trust, has formed somewhat approaching to a distinct idea of the principal characters who have appeared before him during our narrative; but in case our good opinion of his sagacity has been exaggerated, and in order to satisfy such as are addicted to the laudible practice of *skipping* (with whom we have at times a strong fellow-feeling), the following particulars may not be superfluous.

Mr Saunders Fairford, as he was usually called, was a man of business of the old school, moderate in his charges, economical and even niggardly in his expenditure, strictly honest in conducting his own affairs and those of his clients, but taught by long experience to be wary and suspicious in observing the motions of others. Just as the clock of Saint Giles tolled nine, the neat dapper form of the little hale old gentleman was seen at the threshold of the Court hall, or at farthest, at the head of the Back Stairs, trimly dressed in a complete suit of snuff-coloured brown, with stockings of silk or woolle

sued the weather; a bobwig, and a small cocked hat; shoes blacked; Warren would have blacked them; silver shoe-buckles, and a gold rock-buckle. A nosegay in summer, and a sprig of holly in winter, completed his well-known dress and appearance. His manners corresponded with his attire, for they were scrupulously civil, and not a little formal. He was an elder of the kirk, and, of course, zealous for King George and the government even to slaying, as he had showed by taking up arms in their cause. But then, as he had clients and connections of business among families of opposite political tenets, he was particularly cautious to use all the conventional phrases which the civility of the time had devised, as an admissible mode of language betwixt the two parties. Thus he spoke sometimes of the chevalier, but never either of the Prince, which would have been sacrificing his own principles, or of the Pretender, which would have been offensive to those of others. Again, he usually designated the rebellion as the *affair* of 1745, and spoke of any one engaged in it as a person who had been *out* at a certain period.¹ So that, on the whole, Mr Fairford was a man much liked and respected on all sides, though his friends would not have been sorry if he had given a dinner more frequently, as his little cellar contained some choice old wine, which, on such rare occasions, he was no niggard.

The whole pleasure of this good old-fashioned man of method, besides that which he really felt in the discharge of his daily business, was the hope to see his son Alan, the only fruit of a union which had early dissolved, attain what, in the father's eyes, was the proudest of all distinctions—the rank and fame of a well-employed lawyer. Every profession has its peculiar honours, and Mr Fairford's mind was constructed upon so limited and exclusive a plan, that he valued nothing, save the objects of ambition which his own presented. He could have shuddered at Alan's acquiring the renown of a hero, and laughed with scorn at the equally barren laurels of literature; it was the path of the law alone that he was desirous to see him rise to eminence, and the probabilities of success or disappointment were the thoughts of his father by day, and his dream by night.

The disposition of Alan Fairford, as well as his talents, were such to encourage his father's expectations. He had acuteness of intellect, joined to habits of long and patient study, improved no doubt by the discipline of his father's house; to which, generally speaking, he conformed with the utmost docility, expressing no wish for greater or more frequent relaxation than consisted with his father's anxious and severe restrictions. When he did indulge in any juvenile frolics, his father had the candour to lay the whole blame upon his more recurring companion, Darsie Latimer.

This youth, as the reader must be aware, had been received as an apprentice into the family of Mr Fairford, senior, at a time when some delicacy of constitution which had abridged the life of his grandfather, began to show itself in the son, and when the father was, of course, peculiarly disposed to indulge his slightest wish. That the young Englishman was able to pay a considerable board, was a matter of no

¹ See Note M. *The Rebellion as the Affair of 1745.*

importance to Mr Fairford ; it was enough that his presence seemed to make his son cheerful and happy. He was compelled to allow "Darsie was a fine lad, though unsettled," and he would have some difficulty in getting rid of him, and the apprehensions which levities excited, had it not been for the voluntary excursion which gave rise to the preceding correspondence, and in which Mr Fairford secretly rejoiced, as affording the means of separating Alan from his gay companion, at least until he should have assumed, and become accustomed to, the duties of his dry and laborious profession.

But the absence of Darsie was far from promoting the end which the elder Mr Fairford had expected and desired. The young men were united by the closest bonds of intimacy ; and the more so, neither of them sought nor desired to admit any others into their society. Alan Fairford was averse to general company, from a position naturally reserved, and Darsie Latimer from a painful sense of his own unknown origin, peculiarly afflicting in a country where high and low are professed genealogists. The young men were united in all to each other ; it is no wonder, therefore, that their separation was painful, and that its effects upon Alan Fairford, joined to the anxiety occasioned by the tenor of his friend's letters, greatly exceeded what the senior had anticipated. The young man went through his usual duties, his studies, and the examinations to which he was subjected, but with nothing like the zeal and assiduity which he had formerly displayed ; and his anxious and observant father saw but too plainly that his heart was with his absent comrade.

A philosopher would have given way to this tide of feeling, in order to have diminished its excess, and permitted the youths to have had some time together, that their intimacy might have been broken up by degrees ; but Mr Fairford only saw the more direct mode of continued restraint, which, however, he was desirous of veiling under some plausible pretext. In the anxiety which he felt on this occasion he had held communication with an old acquaintance, Peter Drudge, with whom the reader is partly acquainted. "Alan," he said, "once wud, and aye waur ; and he was expecting every moment when he would start off in a wildgoose chase after the callant Latimer ; Sampson, the horse-hirer in Candlemaker-Row, had given him a horse, that Alan had been looking for a good hack, to go to the country ; a few days. And then to oppose him downright—he could not but tell on the way his poor mother was removed—Would to Heaven he were yoked to some tight piece of business, no matter whether well paid, but some job that would hamshackle him at least until the Cock rose, if it were but for decency's sake."

Peter Drudge sympathised, for Peter had a son, who, reason being none, would needs exchange the torn and inky fustian sleeves for a blue jacket and white lapelle ; and he suggested, as the reader knows, the engaging our friend Alan in the matter of Poor Peter Peebles, just opened by the desertion of young Dumtoustie, whose defect would be at the same time concealed ; and this, Drudge said, "would be felling two dogs with one stone."

With these explanations, the reader will hold a man of the elder Fairford's sense and experience free from the hazardous and in-

at curiosity with which boys fling a puppy into a deep pond, merely see if the creature can swim. However confident in his son's talents, which were really considerable, he would have been very sorry to have involved him in the duty of pleading a complicated and difficult case, upon his very first appearance at the bar, had he not resorted to it as an effectual way to prevent the young man from taking a course, which his habits of thinking represented as a most fatal one at the outset of life.

Between two evils Mr Fairford chose that which was in his own apprehension the least; and like a brave officer sending forth his son to battle, rather chose he should die upon the breach than desert the field with dishonour. Neither did he leave him to his own unassisted energies. Like Alpheus preceding Hercules, he himself entered the Augean mass of Peter Peebles's law matters. It was to the old man a labour of love to place in a clear and undistorted view the real merits of this case, which the carelessness and blunders of Peter's former solicitors had converted into a huge chaotic mass of unintelligible technicality; and such was his skill and industry, that he was able, after the severe toil of two or three days, to present to the consideration of the young counsel the principal facts of the case, in a light equally simple and comprehensible. With the assistance of a solicitor so affectionate and indefatigable, Alan Fairford was enabled, when the day of trial arrived, to walk towards the Court, attended by his anxious yet encouraging parent, with some degree of confidence that he would lose no reputation upon this arduous occasion. They were met at the door of the Court by poor Peter Peebles in his usual plenitude of wig and celsitude of hat. He seized upon the young pleader like a lion on his prey. "How is a' wi' you, Mr Alan?—How is a' wi' you, man?—The awfu' day is come at last—a day that will be lang minded in this house. Poor Peter Peebles against the instances—conjoined processes—Hearing in presence—stands for the Short Roll for this day—I have not been able to sleep for a week thinking of it, and, I dare to say, neither has the Lord President himself—for such a cause!! But your father garr'd me tak a wee power muckle of his pint bottle the other night; it's no right mix brandy wi' business, Mr Fairford. I would have been the better o' liquor if I would have drank as muckle as you twa would have had me. But there's a time for a' things, and if ye will dine with me after the case is heard, or whilk is the same, or maybe better, I'll gang my ways hame wi' you, and I winna object to a cheerful glass, within the bounds of moderation."

Old Fairford shrugged his shoulders and hurried past the client, his son wrapt in the sable bombazine, which, in his eyes, was more venerable than an archbishop's lawn, and could not help fondly touching his shoulder, and whispering to him to take courage, and that he was worthy to wear it. The party entered the Outer Hall of the Court (once the place of meeting of the ancient Scottish Parliament), and which corresponds to the use of Westminster Hall in England, serving as a vestibule to the Inner-House, as it is termed, a place of dominion to certain sedentary personages called Lords Ordinary.

The earlier part of the morning was spent by old Fairford in reiterating his instructions to Alan, and in running from one person to another, from whom he thought he could still glean some grain of information, either concerning the point at issue, or collateral circumstances. Meantime Poor Peter Peebles, whose shallow brain was altogether unable to bear the importance of the moment, kept us close to the young counsel as shadow to substance, affected now to speak now to whisper in his ear, now to deck his ghastly countenance with wreathed smiles, now to cloud it with a shade of deep and solemn importance, and anon to contort it with the sneer of scorn and derision. These moods of the client's mind were accompanied by singular "mockings and mowings," fantastic gestures, which a man of rags and litigation deemed appropriate to his changed countenance. Now he brandished his arm aloft, now thrust his straight out, as if to knock his opponent down. Now he laid open palm on his bosom, and now flinging it abroad, he gallantly snapped his fingers in the air.

These demonstrations, and the obvious shame and embarrassment of Alan Fairford, did not escape the observation of the juvenile idlers in the hall. They did not, indeed, approach Peter with their usual familiarity, from some feeling of deference towards Fairford, though many accused him of conceit in presuming to undertake at this early stage of his practice a case of considerable difficulty. But Alan, withstanding this forbearance, was not the less sensible that he and his companion were the subjects of many a passing jest, and much shout of laughter, with which that region at all times abounds.

At length the young counsel's patience gave way, and he threatened to carry his presence of mind and recollection along with it, Alan frankly told his father, that unless he was relieved from the infliction of his client's personal presence and instructions, he must necessarily throw up his brief, and decline pleading the case.

"Hush, hush, my dear Alan," said the old gentleman, almost to his own wit's end upon hearing this dilemma; "dinna mind the ne'er-do-weel; we cannot keep the man from hearing his own counsel though he be not quite right in the head."

"On my life, sir," answered Alan, "I shall be unable to go on; it drives everything out of my remembrance; and if I attempt to speak seriously of the injuries he has sustained, and the condition he is reduced to, how can I expect but that the very appearance of me, an absurd scarecrow will turn it all into ridicule?"

"There is something in that," said Saunders Fairford, glancing at Poor Peter, and then cautiously inserting his forefinger under his bob-wig, in order to rub his temple and aid his invention; "no figure for the fore-bar to see without laughing; but how to get rid of him? To speak sense, or anything like it, is the last thing he will listen to. Stay, ay—Alan, my darling, hae patience; I'll get him off on the instant, like a gowff ba'."

So saying, he hastened to his ally, Peter Drudgeit, who on seeing him with marks of haste in his gait, and care upon his countenance, clapped his pen behind his ear, with "What's the stir now, Saunders?—Is there aught wrang?"

"Here's a dollar, man," said Mr Saunders; "now, or never, Peter, e a good turn. Yonder's your namesake, Peter Peebles, will the swine through our bonny hanks of yarn;¹ get him over to s Coffee-house, man—gie him his meridian—keep him there, k or sober, till the hearing is ower."

"Enough said," quoth Peter Drudgeit, no way displeased with his share in the service required,—“We'se do your bidding.”

Accordingly the scribe was presently seen whispering in the ear ter Peebles, whose responses came forth in the following broken

“Leave the Court for ae minute on this great day of judgment?— I, by the Reg—Eh! what? Brandy, did ye say—French ly?—couldna ye fetch a stoup to the bar under your coat, man? possible? Na, if it's clean impossible, and if we have an hour till they get through the single bill and the summar-roll, I a if I cross the close wi' you; I am sure I need something to my heart up this awful day; but I'll no stay above an instant—bove a minute of time—nor drink aboon a single gill.”

A few minutes afterwards the two Peters were seen moving gh the Parliament Close (which new-fangled affectation has el a Square), the triumphant Drudgeit leading captive the re Peebles, whose legs conducted him towards the dram-shop, his reverted eyes were fixed upon the Court. They dived into immerian abysses of John's coffee-house,² formerly the favourite zvous of the classical and genial Doctor Pitcairn, and were for esent seen no more.

Relieved from his tormentor, Alan Fairford had time to rally his ections, which in the irritation of his spirits, had nearly escaped and to prepare himself for a task, the successful discharge or e in which must, he was aware, have the deepest influence upon ortunes. He had pride, was not without a consciousness of , and the sense of his father's feelings upon the subject impelled o the utmost exertion. Above all, he had that sort of self- and which is essential to success in every arduous undertaking, e was constitutionally free from that feverish irritability, by those, whose over-active imaginations exaggerate difficulties, r themselves incapable of encountering such when they arrive. ing collected all the scattered and broken associations which ecessary, Alan's thoughts reverted to Dumfriesshire, and the rious situation in which he feared his beloved friend had placed lf; and once and again consulted his watch, eager to have his t task commenced and ended, that he might hasten to Darsie's nce. The hour and moment at length arrived. The Macer d, with all his well-remembered brazen strength of lungs, Peter Peebles *versus* Plainstones, *per* Dumtoustie *et* Tough! ster Da-a-niel Dumtoustie!” Dumtoustie answered not the

¹ simile is obvious, from the old manufacture of Scotland, when the gudewife's e the yarn wrought in the winter was called, when laid down to bleach by the le, was peculiarly exposed to the inroads of pigs, seldom well regulated about h farm-house.

² Note N. John's Coffee-House.

summons, which, deep and swelling as it was, could not reach the Queensferry; but our Maister Alan Fairford appeared place.

The Court was very much crowded; for much amusement had been received on former occasions when Peter had volunteered his own oratory, and had been completely successful in routing the gravity of the whole procedure, and putting to silence, not only the counsel of the opposite party, but his own.

Both bench and audience seemed considerably surprised at the juvenile appearance of the young man who appeared in the room. Dumtoustie, for the purpose of opening this complicated and depending process, and the common herd were disappointed at the absence of Peter the client, the Punchinello of the expected entertainment. The Judges looked with a very favourable countenance on our friend Alan, most of them being acquainted, more or less, with so old a practitioner as his father, and all, or almost all, being, from civility, the same fair play to the first pleading of a case, in which the House of Commons yields to the maiden speech of its members.

Lord Bladderskate was an exception to this general expression of benevolence. He scowled upon Alan from beneath his large, straight grey eye-brows, just as if the young lawyer had been usurping his nephew's honours, instead of covering his disgrace; and, from the slings which did his lordship little honour, he privately hoped the young man would not succeed in the cause which his kinsman had abandoned.

Even Lord Bladderskate, however, was, in spite of himself, pleased with the judicious and modest tone in which Alan began his address to the Court, apologising for his own presumption, and excusing the sudden illness of his learned brother, for whom the labours of opening a cause of some difficulty and importance had been more worthily designed. He spoke of himself as he really was, and of young Dumtoustie as what he ought to have been, taking care not to dwell on either topic a moment longer than was necessary. The old Judge's looks became benign; his family pride was appeased, and, pleased equally with the modesty and civility of the young man whom he had thought forward and officious, he turned the scorn of his features into an expression of profound attention. The highest compliment, and the greatest encouragement, which a judge can render to the counsel addressing him.

Having succeeded in securing the favourable attention of the Court, the young lawyer, using the lights which his father's experience and knowledge of business had afforded him, proceeded to his address and clearness, unexpected from one of his years, to strip from the case itself those complicated formalities with which it had been loaded, as a surgeon strips from a wound the dressings which have been hastily wrapped round it, in order to proceed to the cure *secundum artem*. Developed of the cumbrous and complicated technicalities of litigation, with which the perverse obstinacy of the client, the inconsiderate haste or ignorance of his agents, and the evasions of a subtle adversary, had invested the process, the c

or Peter Peebles, standing upon its simple merits, was no bad subject for the declamation of a young counsel, nor did our friend fail to avail himself of its strong points.

He exhibited his client as a simple-hearted, honest, well-meaning man, who, during a copartnership of twelve years, had gradually become impoverished, while his partner (his former clerk), having funds but his share of the same business, into which he had been admitted without any advance of stock, had become gradually more and more wealthy.

"Their association," said Alan, and the little flight was received with some applause, "resembled the ancient story of the fruit which was carved with a knife poisoned on one side of the blade only, so that the individual, to whom the envenomed portion was served, drew decay and death from what afforded savour and sustenance to the consumer of the other moiety." He then plunged boldly into the *re magnum* of accounthooks between the parties; he pursued each statement from the waste-book to the day-book, from the day-book to the bill-book, from the bill-book to the ledger; placed the art-interpolations and insertions of the fallacious Plainstones in array against each other and against the fact; and availing himself to the utmost of his father's previous labours, and his own knowledge of accounthooks in which he had been sedulously trained, he laid before the court a clear and intelligible statement of the affairs of the copartnership, showing, with precision, that a large balance must, at the dissolution, have been due to his client, sufficient to have enabled him to have carried on business on his own account, and thus to have maintained his situation in society as an independent and industrious tradesman. "But instead of this justice being voluntarily rendered to the former clerk to his former master,—by the party obliged to the benefactor,—by one honest man to another,—his wretched client had been compelled to follow his quondam clerk, his present attorney, from Court to Court; had found his just claims met with well-pleaded but unfounded counter-claims, had seen his party shift his character of pursuer or defender, as often as Harlequin effects his transformations, till, in a chase so varied and so long, the unhappy plaintiff had lost substance, reputation, and almost the use of reason himself, and came before their Lordships an object of thoughtless compassion to the unreflecting, of compassion to the better-hearted, and of awful meditation to every one, who considered that, in a country where excellent laws were administered by upright and incorruptible judges, a man might pursue an almost indisputable claim through the mazes of litigation; lose fortune, reputation, and reason itself in the chase, and now come before the Supreme Court of his country in the wretched condition of his unhappy client, a victim to protracted justice, and to that hope delayed which sickens the heart."

The force of this appeal to feeling made as much impression on the bench as had been previously effected by the clearness of Alan's argument. The absurd form of Peter himself, with his tow-wig, was fortunately not present to excite any ludicrous emotion, and the pause that took place, when the young lawyer had concluded his speech, was followed by a murmur of approbation, which the ears of his father

drank in as the sweetest sounds that had ever entered them. M a hand of gratulation was thrust out to his grasp, trembling as it with anxiety, and finally with delight; his voice faltering as he rep. "Ay, ay, I kend Alan was the lad to make a spoon or spoil a horn

The counsel on the other side arose, an old practitioner, who noted too closely the impression made by Alan's pleading, no fear the consequences of an immediate decision. He paid the high compliments to his very young brother—"the Benjamin, as he would presume to call him, of the learned Faculty—said the alleged lordships of Mr Peebles were compensated, by his being placed in a situation where the benevolence of their lordships had assigned gratuitously such assistance as he might not otherwise have obtained at a high price—and allowed his young brother had put many things in such a new point of view, that, although he was quite certain of his ability to refute them, he was honestly desirous of having a few hours to arrange his answer, in order to be able to follow Mr Fairford from point to point. He had farther to observe, there was one point in the case to which his brother, whose attention had been otherwise so wonderfully comprehensive, had not given the consideration which he expected; it was founded on the interpretation of certain correspondence which had passed betwixt the parties, soon after the dissolution of the copartnery."

The Court, having heard Mr Tough, readily allowed him two days for preparing himself, hinting at the same time that he might find his task difficult, and affording the young counsel, with high encouragements upon the mode in which he had acquitted himself, the choice of speaking, either now or at the next calling of the cause, upon the point which Plainstaness's lawyer had adverted to.

Alan modestly apologised for what in fact had been an omission very pardonable in so complicated a case, and professed himself instantly ready to go through that correspondence, and prove that it was in form and substance exactly applicable to the view of the case he had submitted to their lordships. He applied to his father, who sat behind him, to hand him, from time to time, the letters, in the order in which he meant to read and comment upon them.

Old Counsellor Tough had probably formed an ingenious enough scheme to blunt the effect of the young lawyer's reasoning, by thus obliging him to follow up a process of reasoning, clear and complete in itself, by a hasty and extemporaneous appendix. If so, he seemed likely to be disappointed; for Alan was well prepared on this, as on other parts of the cause, and recommenced his pleading with a degree of animation, which added force even to what he had formerly stated, and might perhaps have occasioned the old gentleman to regret having again called him up; when his father, as he handed him the letters, put one into his hand which produced a singular effect on the pleader.

At the first glance he saw that the paper had no reference to the affairs of Peter Peebles; but the first glance also showed him, w

¹ Said of an adventurous gipsy, who resolves at all risks to convert a sheep's horn into a spoon.

at that time, and in that presence, he could not help reading; which, being read, seemed totally to disconcert his ideas. He red short in his harangue—gazed on the paper with a look of se and horror—uttered an exclamation, and flinging down the which he had in his hand, hurried out of court without returning gle word of answer to the various questions, “What was the r?”—“Was he taken unwell?”—“Should not a chair be called?”

c. &c.

elder Mr Fairford, who remained seated, and looking as senseless if he had been made of stone, was at length recalled to himself e anxious inquiries of the judges and the counsel after his son’s a. He then rose with an air, in which was mingled the deep al reverence in which he held the Court, with some internal of agitation, and with difficulty mentioned something of a ke—a piece of bad news—Alan, he hoped, would be well enough rrow. But unable to proceed farther, he clasped his hands her, exclaiming, “My son! my son!” and left the court hastily, n pursuit of him.

What’s the matter with the auld bitch next?”¹ said an acute physical judge, though somewhat coarse in his manners, aside brethren. “This is a daft cause, Bladderskate—first, it drives oor man mad that aught it—then your nevy goes daft with , and flies the pit—then this smart young hopeful is aff the books oo hard study, I fancy—and now auld Saunders Fairford is as e as the best of them. What say ye till ’t, ye bitch?’”
 “Nothing, my lord,” answered Bladderskate, much too formal to e the levities in which his philosophical brother sometimes ged—“I say nothing, but pray to Heaven to keep our owu

men, amen,” answered his learned brother; “for some of us have ew to spare.”

e Court then arose, and the audience departed, greatly wonder- t the talent displayed by Alan Fairford at his first appearance in e so difficult and so complicated, and assigning an hundred etural causes, each different from the others, for the singular ruption which had clouded his day of success. The worst of the e was, that six agents, who had each come to the separate reso- of thrusting a retaining fee into Alan’s hand as he left the Court, their heads as they returned the money into their leathern es, and said, “that the lad was clever, but they would like to see of him before they engaged him in the way of business—they ot like his lowping away like a flea in a blanket.”

dition ascribes this whimsical style of language to the ingenious and philo- al Lord Kames.

CHAPTER II.

HAD our friend Alexander Fairford known the consequences of his son's abrupt retreat from the Court, which are mentioned in the last chapter, it might have accomplished the prediction of the lively old judge, and driven him utterly distracted. As it was, however, miserable enough. His son had risen ten degrees higher in estimation than ever, by his display of juridical talents, which seem to assure him that the applause of the judges and professors of the law, which, in his estimation, was worth that of all mankind besides, was secured to the fullest extent the advantageous estimate which even parental partiality had been induced to form of Alan's powers. On the other hand, he felt that he was himself a little humbled, from the disguise which he had practised towards this son of his hopes and wishes.

The truth was, that on the morning of this eventful day, Mr Alexander Fairford had received from his correspondent and friend Provost Crosbie of Dumfries, a letter of the following tenor:—

“DEAR SIR,

“YOUR respected favour of 25th ultimo, per favour of Mr D Latimer, reached me in safety, and I showed to the young gentleman such attentions as he was pleased to accept of. The object of my present writing is twofold. First, the council are of opinion that they should now begin to stir in the thirlage cause; and they think they will be able, from evidence *noviter repertum*, to enable you to answer your condescendence upon the use and wont of the burgh, touch the *grana invecta et illata*. So you will please consider yourself authorised to speak to Mr Pest, and lay before him the papers which you will receive by the coach. The council think that a fee of three guineas may be sufficient on this occasion, as Mr Pest had threatened drawing the original condescendence.

“I take the opportunity of adding, that there has been a great row among the Solway fishermen, who have destroyed, in a most improper manner, the stake-nets set up near the mouth of this river; and have besides attacked the house of Quaker Geddes, one of the principal partners of the Tide-net Fishing Company, and done a great deal of damage. Am sorry to add, young Mr Latimer was in the fray, and has not since been heard of. Murder is spoke of, but may be a word of course. As the young gentleman has behaved rather oddly while in these parts, as in declining to dine with me more than once, and going about the country with strolling fidlers and suchlike, I rather hope that his present absence is only occasioned by a frolic; but as his servant has been making inquiries concerning respecting his master, I thought it best to acquaint you in court post. I have only to add, that our sheriff has taken a precognition and committed one or two of the rioters. If I can be useful in the matter, either by advertising for Mr Latimer as missing, public

ward, or otherwise, I will obey your respected instructions, being
 most obedient to command,
 "WILLIAM CROSBIE."

When Mr Fairford received this letter, and had read it to an end, his first idea was to communicate it to his son, that an express might be instantly despatched, or a king's messenger sent with proper authority to search after his late guest.

The habits of the fishers were rude, as he well knew, though not absolutely sanguinary or ferocious; and there had been instances of men transporting persons who had interfered in their smuggling trade to the Isle of Man, and elsewhere, and keeping them under restraint for many weeks. On this account, Mr Fairford was naturally disposed to feel anxiety concerning the fate of his late inmate; and, at an interesting moment, would certainly have set out himself, or induced his son to go in pursuit of his friend.

But, alas! he was both a father and an agent. In the one capacity, he looked on his son as dearer to him than all the world besides; in the other, the lawsuit which he conducted was to him like an infant's nurse, and the case of Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstaness, he saw, adjourned, perhaps *sine die*, should this document reach the hands of his son. The mutual and enthusiastical affection between the young men was well known to him; and he concluded that, if the precarious state of Latimer were made known to Alan Fairford, it would render him not only unwilling, but totally unfit, to discharge his duty of the day, to which the old gentleman attached such ideas of importance.

On mature reflection, therefore, he resolved, though not without some feelings of compunction, to delay communicating to his son the agreeable intelligence which he had received, until the business of the day should be ended. The delay, he persuaded himself, could be of little consequence to Darsie Latimer, whose folly, he dared to say, had led him into some scrape which would meet an appropriate punishment, in some accidental restraint, which would be thus prolonged only a few hours longer. Besides, he would have time to speak to the Sheriff of the county—perhaps to the King's Advocate—and to bring about the matter in a regular manner, or, as he termed it, as summing up the duties of a solicitor, to *age as accords*.¹

The scheme, as we have seen, was partially successful, and was only ultimately defeated, as he confessed to himself with shame, by his own very unbusiness-like mistake of shuffling the Provost's letter, in the hurry and anxiety of the morning, among some papers belonging to Peter Peebles's affairs, and then handing it to his son, without observing the blunder. He used to protest, even till the day of his death, that he never had been guilty of such an inaccuracy as giving a paper out of his hand without looking at the docketing, except on that unhappy occasion, when, of all others, he had such a particular reason to regret his negligence.

Disturbed by these reflections, the old gentleman had, for the first

¹ A Scots law phrase, of no very determinate import, meaning, generally, to do what is fitting.

time in his life, some disinclination, arising from shame and vexation to face his own son; so that to protract for a little the meeting, which he feared would be a painful one, he went to wait upon the Sheriff's depute, who he found had set off for Dumfries, in great haste, and superintend in person the investigation which had been set on foot by his Substitute. This gentleman's clerk could say little on the subject of the riot, excepting that it had been serious, much damage done to property, and some personal violence offered to individuals; but as far as he had yet heard, no lives lost on the spot.

Mr Fairford was compelled to return home with this intelligence, and on inquiring at James Wilkinson where his son was, received for answer, that "Maister Alan was in his own room, and very busy."

"We must have our explanation over," said Saunders Fairford to himself. "Better a finger off, as aye wagging;" and going to the door of his son's apartment, he knocked at first gently—then more loudly—but received no answer. Somewhat alarmed at this silence, he opened the door of the chamber—it was empty—clothes lay in confusion with the law-books and papers, as if the inmate had been engaged in hastily packing for a journey. As Mr Fairford looked around in alarm, his eye was arrested by a sealed letter lying upon his son's writing-table, and addressed to himself. It contained the following words:—

"MY DEAREST FATHER,

"YOU will not, I trust, be surprised, nor perhaps very much displeased, to learn that I am on my way to Dumfriesshire, to learn, by my own personal investigation, the present state of my dear friend, and to afford him such relief as may be in my power, and which, I trust, will be effectual. I do not presume to reflect upon you, dearest sir, for concealing from me information of so much consequence to my peace of mind and happiness; but I hope your having done so will be, if not an excuse, at least some mitigation of my present offence, in taking a step of consequence without consulting your pleasure; and, I may say in my farther own, under circumstances which perhaps might lead to your disapprobation of my purpose. I can only say, in farther apology, that if anything unhappy, which Heaven forbid! shall have occurred to the person who, next to yourself, is dearest to me, in this world, I shall have on my heart, as a subject of eternal regret, that being in a certain degree warned of his danger, and furnished with the means of obviating it, I did not instantly hasten to his assistance, but preferred giving my attention to the business of this unlucky morning. No view of personal distinction, nothing, indeed, short of your earnest and often expressed wishes, could have detained me at town till this day; and having made this sacrifice to filial duty, I trust you will hold me excused, if I now obey the calls of friendship and humanity. Do not be in the least anxious on my account; I shall know, I trust, how to conduct myself with due caution in any emergency which may occur, otherwise my legal studies for so many years have been to little purpose. I am fully provided with money, and also with arms, in case of need; but you may rely on my prudence in avoiding all occasions of using the latter, short of the last necessity."

ty. God Almighty bless you, my dearest father! and grant that you may forgive the first, and, I trust, the last act approaching towards re-meditated disobedience, of which I either have now, or shall hereafter have, to accuse myself. I remain, till death, your dutiful and affectionate son,
ALAN FAIRFORD."

"P.S.—I shall write with the utmost regularity, acquainting you with my motions, and requesting your advice. I trust my stay will be very short, and I think it possible that I may bring back Darsie along with me."

The paper dropped from the old man's hand when he was thus assured of the misfortune which he apprehended. His first idea was to get a post-chaise and pursue the fugitive; but he recollected that, upon the very rare occasions when Alan had shown himself docile to the *patria potestas*, his natural ease and gentleness of disposition seemed hardened into obstinacy, and that now, entitled, as he arrived at the years of majority, and a member of the learned faculty, to direct his own motions, there was great doubt, whether, in the event of his overtaking his son, he might be able to prevail upon him to return back. In such a risk of failure, he thought it wiser to desist from his purpose, especially as even his success in such a pursuit would give a ridiculous *eclat* to the whole affair, which could not be otherwise than prejudicial to his son's rising character.

Bitter, however, were Saunders Fairford's reflections, as, again picking up the fatal scroll, he threw himself into his son's leathern easy-chair, and bestowed upon it a disjointed commentary. "Bring back Darsie? little doubt of that—the bad shilling is sure enough to come back again. I wish Darsie no worse ill than that he were carried where the silly fool, Alan, should never see him again. It was a bad hour that he darkened my doors in, for, ever since that, Alan has given up his ain old-fashioned mother-wit, for the other's caper-ited maggots and nonsense.—Provided with money? you must have more than I know of, then, my friend, for I trow I kept you pretty short, for your own good.—Can he have gotten more fees? or, does he think five guineas has neither beginning nor end?—Arms! what would he do with arms, or what would any man do with them, that is not a regular soldier under government, or else a thief-taker? I have had enough of arms, I trow, although I carried them for King George and the government. But this is a worse strait than Falk-field yet.—God guide us, we are poor inconsistent creatures! I think the lad should have made so able an appearance, and then trotted off this gate, after a glaiket ne'er-do-weel, like a hound upon a scent?—Las-a-day! it's a sore thing to see a stunkard cow kick over the pail when it's reaming fou.—But, after all, it's an ill bird that defiles its ain nest. I must cover up the scandal as well as I can. What's the matter now, James?"

"A message sir," said James Wilkinson, "from my Lord President; he hopes Mr Alan is not seriously indisposed."

"From the Lord President? the Lord preserve us!—I'll send an

answer this instant; bid the lad sit down, and ask him to drink James.—Let me see," continued he, taking a sheet of gilt paper "how we are to draw our answers."

Ere his pen had touched the paper, James was in the room again "What now James?"

"Lord Bladderskate's lad is come to ask how Mr Alan is, as I left the Court——"

"Ay, ay, ay," answered Saunders, bitterly; "has e'en made moonlight flitting, like my lord's nevoy."

"Shall I say sae, sir?" said James, who, as an old soldier, was literal in all things touching the service.

"The devil! no, no!—Bid the lad sit down and taste our ale. will write his lordship an answer."

Once more the gilt paper was resumed, and once more the door was opened by James.

"Lord —— sends his servitor to ask after Mr Alan."

"Oh, the deevil take their civility!" said poor Saunders. "Send him down to drink too—I will write to his lordship."

"The lads will bide your pleasure, sir, as lang as I keep the bick for you; but this ringing is like to wear out the bell, I think; there are they at it again."

He answered the fresh summons accordingly, and came back to inform Mr Fairford, that the Dean of Faculty was below, inquiring for Mr Alan.—"Will I set him down to drink, too?" said James.

"Will you be an idiot, sir?" said Mr Fairford. "Show Mr Dean into the parlour."

In going slowly down stairs, step by step, the perplexed man whose business had time enough to reflect that, if it be possible to put a fair gloss upon a true story, the verity always serves the purpose better than any substitute which ingenuity can devise. He therefore told his learned visitor, that although his son had been incensed by the heat of the court, and the long train of hard study, day and night, preceding his exertions, yet he had fortunately so recovered, as to be in condition to obey upon the instant a sudden summons which had called him to the country, on a matter of life and death.

"It should be a serious matter indeed that takes my young friend away at this moment," said the good-natured Dean. "I wish he had stayed to finish his pleading, and put down old Tough. Without compliment, Mr Fairford, it was as fine a first appearance as I ever heard. I should be sorry your son did not follow it up in a reply. Nothing like striking while the iron is hot."

Mr Saunders Fairford made a bitter grimace as he acquiesced in an opinion which was indeed decidedly his own; but he thought most prudent to reply, "that the affair which rendered his son Alan's presence in the country absolutely necessary, regarded the affair of a young gentleman of great fortune, who was a particular friend of Alan's, and who never took any material step in his affairs without consulting his counsel learned in the law."

"Well, well, Mr Fairford, you know best," answered the learned Dean; "if there be death or marriage in the case, a will or a w"

ing is to be preferred to all other business. I am happy Mr Alan is so much recovered as to be able for travel, and wish you a very good morning."

Having thus taken his ground to the Dean of Faculty, Mr Fairford hastily wrote cards in answer to the inquiry of the three judges, recounting for Alan's absence in the same manner. These, being properly sealed and addressed, he delivered to James, with directions to dismiss the parti-coloured gentry, who, in the meanwhile, had consumed a gallon of twopenny ale, while discussing points of law, and addressing each other by their masters' titles.¹

The exertion which these matters demanded, and the interest which so many persons of legal distinction appeared to have taken in his son, greatly relieved the oppressed spirit of Saunders Fairford, who continued to talk mysteriously of the very important business which had interfered with his son's attendance during the brief remainder of the session. He endeavoured to lay the same unction to his own heart; but here the application was less fortunate, for his conscience told him, that no end, however important, which could be achieved in Darsie Latimer's affairs, could be balanced against the reputation which Alan was like to forfeit, by deserting the cause of poor Peter Peebles.

In the meanwhile, although the haze which surrounded the cause and causes of that unfortunate litigant had been for a time dispelled by Alan's eloquence, like a fog by the thunder of artillery, yet it seemed once more to settle down upon the mass of litigation, thick with the palpable darkness of Egypt, at the very sound of Mr Tough's voice, who, on the second day after Alan's departure, was heard in answer to the opening counsel. Deep-mouthed, long-breathed, and pertinacious, taking a pinch of snuff betwixt every sentence, which otherwise seemed interminable—the veteran pleader prosed over all the themes which had been treated so luminously by Fairford: he quietly and imperceptibly replaced all the rubbish which the other had cleared away; and succeeded in restoring the veil of obscurity and unintelligibility which had for many years darkened the case of Peebles against Plainstones; and the matter was once more hung up by a remit to an accountant, with instruction to report before answer. So different a result from that which the public had been led to expect from Alan's speech, gave rise to various speculations.

The client himself opined, that it was entirely owing, first, to his own absence during the first day's pleading, being, as he said, dashed with brandy, usquebaugh, and other strong waters, at John's office-house, *per ambages* of Peter Drudgeit, employed to that effect, and through the device, counsel, and covyne of Saunders Fairford, his agent, or pretended agent. Secondly, by the flight and voluntary desertion of the younger Fairford, the advocate; on account of which, he served both father and son with a petition and complaint against them, for malversation in office. So that the apparent and most probable issue of this cause seemed to menace the melancholy of Saunders Fairford with additional subject for plague and mortification.

¹ See Note O. *Scottish Judges.*

fication; which was the more galling, as his conscience told him that the case was really given away, and that a very brief resumption of the former argument, with reference to the necessary authorities and points of evidence, would have enabled Alan, by the mere breath, as it were, of his mouth, to blow away the various cobwebs with which Mr Tough had again invested the proceedings. But it went, he said, just like a decret in absence, and was lost for want of a contradictor.

In the meanwhile nearly a week passed over without Mr Fairford hearing a word directly from his son. He learned, indeed, by a letter from Mr Crosbie, that the young counsellor had safely reached Dumfries, but had left that town upon some ulterior researches, the purpose of which he had not communicated. The old man, thus left to suspense, and to mortifying recollections, deprived also of the domestic society to which he had been habituated, began to suffer in body as well as in mind. He had formed the determination of setting out in person for Dumfriesshire, when, after having been dogged, peevish, and snappish to his clerks and domestics, to an unusual and almost intolerable degree, the acrimonious humours settled in a hissing-hot fit of the gout, which is a well-known tamer of the most forward spirits, and under whose discipline we shall, for the present, leave him, as the continuation of this history assumes, with the next division, a form somewhat different from direct narrative and epistolary correspondence, though partaking of the character of both.

CHAPTER III.

JOURNAL OF DARSIE LATIMER.

[The following Address is written on the inside of the envelope which contained the Journal.]

INTO what hands soever these leaves may fall, they will instruct him, during a certain time at least, in the history of the life of an unfortunate young man, who, in the heart of a free country, and without any crime being laid to his charge, has been, and is, subjected to a course of unlawful and violent restraint. He who opens this letter is therefore conjured to apply to the nearest magistracy, and, following such indications as the papers may afford, to exert himself for the relief of one, who, while he possesses every claim to assistance which oppressed innocence can give, has, at the same time, both the inclination and the means of being grateful to his deliverers. Or, if the person obtaining these letters shall want courage or means to effect the writer's release, he is, in that case, conjured, by every duty of a man to his fellow-mortals, and of a Christian towards one who professes the same holy faith, to take the speediest measures for conveying them with speed and safety to the hands of Alan Fairford, Esq., Advocate, residing in the family of

er, Alexander Fairford, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Brown's
are, Edinburgh. He may be assured of a liberal reward, besides
consciousness of having discharged a real duty to humanity.

MY DEAREST ALAN,

FEELING as warmly towards you in doubt and in distress, as I ever
in the brightest days of our intimacy, it is to you whom I address
istory which may perhaps fall into very different hands. A por-
of my former spirit descends to my pen, when I write your
me, and indulging the happy thought that you may be my deliverer
in my present uncomfortable and alarming situation, as you have
in my guide and counsellor on every former occasion, I will subdue
dejection which would otherwise overwhelm me. Therefore, as,
even knows, I have time enough to write, I will endeavour to pour
thoughts out, as fully and freely as of old, though probably with-
the same gay and happy levity.

If the papers should reach other hands than yours, still I will not
ret this exposure of my feelings; for, allowing for an ample share
he folly incidental to youth and inexperience, I fear not that I
e much to be ashamed of in my narrative; nay, I even hope, that
open simplicity and frankness with which I am about to relate
ry singular and distressing circumstance, may prepossess even a
nger in my favour; and that, amid the multitude of seemingly
ial circumstances which I detail at length, a clew may be found
ffect my liberation.

Another chance certainly remains—the Journal, as I may call it,
y never reach the hands, either of the dear friend to whom it is
ressed, or those of an indifferent stranger, but may become the
y of the persons by whom I am at present treated as a prisoner.
it be so—they will learn from it little but what they already
w; that, as a man and an Englishman, my soul revolts at the
ge which I have received; that I am determined to essay every
sible means to obtain my freedom; that captivity has not broken
spirit, and that, although they may doubtless complete their
ression by murder, I am still willing to bequeath my cause to the
ice of my country. Undeterred, therefore, by the probability
t my papers may be torn from me, and subjected to the inspection
ne in particular, who, causelessly my enemy already, may be yet
her incensed at me for recording the history of my wrongs, I
eed to resume the history of events which have befallen me since
conclusion of my last letter to my dear Alan Fairford, dated, if I
ake not, on the 5th day of this still current month of August.
pon the night preceding the date of that letter I had been
ent, for the purpose of an idle frolic, at a dancing party at the
ge of Brokenburn, about six miles from Dumfries; many persons
t have seen me there, should the fact appear of importance suf-
nt to require investigation. I danced, played on the violin, and
part in the festivity till about midnight, when my servant,
uel Owen, brought me my horses, and I rode back to a small
called Shepherd's Bush, kept by Mrs Gregson, which had been
sionally my residence for about a fortnight past. I spent the

earlier part of the forenoon in writing a letter which I have already mentioned, to you, my dear Alan, and which, I think, you must have received in safety. Why did I not follow your advice; so often given to me? Why did I linger in the neighbourhood of a danger, of which a kind voice had warned me? These are now unavailing questions. I was blinded by a fatality, and remained, fluttering like a moth around the candle, until I have been scorched to some purpose.

The greater part of the day had passed, and time hung heavy on my hands. I ought, perhaps, to blush at recollecting what has been often objected to me by the dear friend to whom this letter is addressed—viz. the facility with which I have, in moments of indolence, suffered my motions to be directed by any person who chanced to come near me, instead of taking the labour of thinking or deciding for myself. I had employed for some time, as a sort of guide and errand-boy, a lad named Benjamin, the son of one widow Coltham, who lives near the Shepherd's Bush, and I cannot but remember that, upon several occasions, I had of late suffered him to possess more influence over my motions, than at all became the difference of our age and condition. At present, he exerted himself to persuade me that it was the finest possible sport to see the fish taken out from the nets placed in the Solway at the reflux of the tide, and he urged my going thither this evening so much, that, looking back on all the whole circumstances, I cannot but think he had some especial motive for his conduct. These particulars I have mentioned, that, if these papers fall into friendly hands, the boy may be sought after and submitted to examination.

His eloquence being unable to persuade me that I should take any pleasure in seeing the fruitless struggles of the fish when left in the nets and deserted by the tide, he artfully suggested, that Mr. and Miss Geddes, a respectable Quaker family well known in the neighbourhood, and with whom I had contracted habits of intimacy, would possibly be offended if I did not make them an early visit. Both, he said, had been particularly inquiring the reasons of my leaving the house rather suddenly on the previous day. I resolved, therefore, to walk up to Mount Sharon and make my apologies; and I agreed to permit the boy to attend upon me, and wait my return from the house, so that I might fish on my way homeward to Shepherd's Bush, for which, for amusement, he assured me, I would find the evening most favourable. I mention this minute circumstance, because I strongly suspect that this boy had a presentiment how the evening was to terminate with me, and entertained the selfish though childish wish of securing for himself an angling-rod which he had often admired, as a part of the spoils. I may do the boy wrong, but I had before remarked in the peculiar art of pursuing the trifling objects of cupidity proper to his age, with the systematic address of much riper years.

When we had commenced our walk, I upbraided him with the coldness of the evening, considering the season, the easterly wind, and other circumstances, unfavourable for angling. He persisted in his own story, and made a few casts, as if to convince me of my error, but caught no fish; and, indeed, as I am now convinced, was more intent on watching my motions than on taking any. Wh

culed him once more on his fruitless endeavours, he answered with a sneering smile, that "the trouts would not rise, because there was no thunder in the air;" an intimation which, in one sense, I have found too true.

I arrived at Mount Sharon; was received by my friends there with the wonted kindness; and after being a little rallied on my having suddenly left them on the preceding evening, I agreed to make atonement by staying all night, and dismissed the lad who attended with fishing-rod, to carry that information to Shepherd's Bush. It may be doubted whether he went thither, or in a different direction.

About eight and nine o'clock, when it began to become dark, we went on the terrace to enjoy the appearance of the firmament, glittering with ten million of stars; to which a slight touch of early twilight gave tenfold lustre. As we gazed on this splendid scene, Miss Edes, I think, was the first to point out to our admiration a shooting or falling star, which, she said, drew a long train after it. Looking to the part of the heavens which she pointed out, I distinctly perceived two successive sky-rockets arise and burst in the sky.

"These meteors," said Mr Geddes, in answer to his sister's observation, "are not formed in heaven, nor do they bode any good to the dwellers upon earth."

As he spoke I looked to another quarter of the sky, and a rocket, as a signal in answer to those which had already appeared, rose up from the earth, and burst apparently among the stars.

Mr Geddes seemed very thoughtful for some minutes, and then said to his sister, "Rachel, though it waxes late, I must go down to the fishing-station, and pass the night in the overseer's room there." "Nay, then," replied the lady, "I am but too well assured that the powers of Belial are menacing these nets and devices. Joshua, art thou a man of peace, and wilt thou willingly and wittingly thrust thyself, where thou mayest be tempted by the old man Adam within thee, to enter into debate and strife?"

"I am a man of peace, Rachel," answered Mr Geddes, "even to the utmost extent which our friends can demand of humanity; and never have I ever used, nor, with the help of God, will I at any future time employ, the arm of flesh to repel or to revenge injuries. If I can, by mild reasons and firm conduct, save those rude men from committing a crime, and the property belonging to myself and others from sustaining damage, surely I do but the duty of a man and a Christian?"

With these words he ordered his horse instantly; and his sister, unwilling to argue with him, folded her arms upon her bosom, and looked up to heaven with a resigned and yet sorrowful countenance. These particulars may appear trivial; but it is better, in my present situation, to exert my faculties in recollecting the past, and in regulating it, than waste them in vain and anxious anticipations of the future.

It would have been scarcely proper in me to remain in the house, when the master was thus suddenly summoned away; and I therefore begged permission to attend him to the fishing-station, promising his sister that I would be a guarantee for his safety.

The proposal seemed to give much pleasure to Miss Geddes. "It be so, brother", she said; "and let the young man have the desire of his heart, that there may be a faithful witness to stand by thee in the hour of need, and to report how it shall fare with thee."

"Nay, Rachel," said the worthy man, "thou art to blame in that that to quiet thy apprehensions on my account, thou shouldst thrust me into danger—if danger it shall prove to be—this youth, our guest for whom, doubtless, in case of mishap, as many hearts will ache, may be afflicted on our account."

"No, my good friend," said I, taking Mr Geddes's hand, "I am not so happy as you suppose me. Were my span to be concluded this evening, few would so much as know that such a being had existed for twenty years on the face of the earth; and of these few only one would sincerely regret me. Do not, therefore, refuse me the privilege of attending you; and of showing, by so trifling an act of kindness, that if I have few friends, I am at least desirous to serve them."

"Thou hast a kind heart, I warrant thee," said Joshua Geddes, returning the pressure of my hand. "Rachel, the young man shall go with me. Why should he not face danger, in order to do justice and preserve peace? There is that within me," he added, looking upwards, and with a passing enthusiasm which I had not before observed, and which perhaps rather belonged to the sect than to his own personal character—"I say, I have that within which assures me, that though the ungodly may rage, even like the storm of the ocean, they shall not have freedom to prevail against us."

Having spoken thus, Mr Geddes appointed a pony to be saddled for my use; and having taken a basket with some provisions, and a servant to carry back the horses, for which there was no accommodation at the fishing-station, we set off about nine o'clock at night, after three quarters of an hour's riding, arrived at our place of destination.

The station consists, or then consisted, of huts for four or five fishermen, a cooperage and shed, and a better sort of cottage in which the superintendent resided. We gave our horses to the servant, to be carried back to Mount Sharon; my companion pressing himself anxious for their safety—and knocked at the door of the house. At first we only heard a barking of dogs; but the animals became quiet on snuffing beneath the door, and acknowledging the presence of friends. A hoarse voice then demanded in rather unfriendly accents, who we were, and what we wanted, and it was not until Joshua named himself, and called upon the superintendent to open, that the latter appeared at the door of the hut, attended by three large dogs of the Newfoundland breed. He had a flambeau in his hand, and two large heavy ship-pistols stuck into his belt. He was a stout, elderly man, who had been a sailor, as I learned, during the earlier part of his life, and was now trusted and confided in by the Fishing Company, whose concerns he directed under the orders of Mr Geddes.

"Thou didst not expect me to-night, friend Davies?" said my friend to the old man, who was arranging seats for us by the fire.

"No, Master Geddes," answered he, "I did not expect you, nor, speak the truth, did I wish for you either."

"These are plain terms, John Davies," answered Mr Geddes.

"Ay, ay, sir, I know your worship loves no holiday speeches."

"Thou dost guess, I suppose, what brings us here so late, John Davies?" said Mr Geddes.

"I do suppose, sir," answered the superintendent, "that it was these d—d smuggling wreckers on the coast are showing lights to gather their forces, as they did the night before they came down the dam-dike and wears up the country; but if that same be the case, I wish once more you had stayed away, for your worship has no fighting tackle aboard, I think; and there will be work enough ere morning, your worship."

"Worship is due to Heaven only, John Davies," said Geddes. "I often desired thee to desist from using that phrase to me."

"I won't, then," said John; "no offence meant: But how the devil can a man stand picking his words when he is just going to get blows?"

"I hope not, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes. "Call in the rest of the men, that I may give them their instructions."

"I may cry till doomsday, Master Geddes, ere a soul answers—towardly lubbers have all made sail—the cooper, and all the rest of them, so soon as they heard the enemy were at sea. They were all taken to the long-boat, and left the ship among the breakers, but little Phil and myself—they have, by ——!"

"I wear not at all, John Davies—thou art an honest man; and I swear, without an oath, that thy comrades love their own bones more than my goods and chattels. And so thou hast no assistance but little Phil against a hundred men or two?"

"Why, there are the dogs, your honour knows, Neptune and Thetis and the puppy may do something; and then though your worship beg pardon—though your honour be no great fighter, this young fellow may bear a hand."

"Ay, and I see you are provided with arms," said Mr Geddes; "let me see them."

"Ay, ay, sir; here be a pair of buffers will bite as well as bark—they will make sure of two rogues at least. It would be a shame to go like without firing a shot.—Take care, your honour, they are well-shotted."

"Ay, John Davies, I will take care of them," throwing the pistols into a tub of water beside him; "and I wish I could render the whole party of them useless at the same moment."

A deep shade of displeasure passed over John Davies's weathered countenance. "Belike your honour is going to take the buff and yourself, then?" he said, after a pause. "Why, I can be of little use now; and since your worship, or your honour, or what you are, means to strike quietly, I believe you will do it better without me than with me, for I am like enough to make mischief, I think; but I'll never leave my post without orders."

"When you have mine, John Davies, to go to Mount Sharon and take the boy Phil with you. Where is he?"

"He is on the outlook for these scums of the earth," answered Davies; "but it is to no purpose to know when they come, if we not to stand to our weapons."

"We will use none but those of sense and reason, John."

"And you may just as well cast chaff against the wind, as spend sense and reason to the like of them."

"Well, well, be it so," said Joshua; "and now, John Davies, know thou art what the world calls a brave fellow, and I have found thee an honest one. And now I command you to go to Mount Sharon, and let Phil lie on the bank-side—see the poor boy has sea-cloak, though—and watch what happens here, and let him bring you the news; and if any violence shall be offered to the property there, I trust to your fidelity to carry my sister to Dumfries, to the house of our friends the Corsacks, and inform the civil authorities of what mischief hath befallen."

The old seaman paused a moment. "It is hard lines for me," said, "to leave your honour in tribulation; and yet, staying here, I am only like to make bad worse; and your honour's sister, Rachel, must be looked to, that's certain; for if the rogues once lay their hand to mischief, they will come to Mount Sharon after we have wasted and destroyed this here snug little roadstead, which I thought to ride at anchor for life."

"Right, right, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes; "and best to leave the dogs with you."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the veteran, "for they are something of a mind, and would not keep quiet if they saw mischief doing; so be they might come to mischief, poor dumb creatures. So God bless your honour—I mean your worship—I cannot bring my mouth to say fare you well.—Here, Neptune, Thetis! come, dogs, come!"

So saying, and with a very crestfallen countenance, John Davies left the hut.

"Now there goes one of the best and most faithful creatures ever was born," said Mr Geddes, as the superintendent shut the door of the cottage. "Nature made him with a heart that would not have suffered him to harm a fly; but thou seest, friend Latimer, that as men arm their bull-dogs with spiked collars, and their game-cocks with steel spurs, to aid them in fight, so they corrupt, by education, the best and mildest natures, until fortitude and spirit become stubbornness and ferocity. Believe me, friend Latimer, I would soon expose my faithful household dog to a vain combat with a pack of wolves, as you trusty creature to the violence of the enraged multitude. But I need say little on this subject to thee, friend Latimer, who, I doubt not, art trained to believe that courage is displayed in honour attained, not by doing and suffering, as becomes a man, but by which fate calls us to suffer, and justice commands us to do, because thou art ready to retort violence for violence, and consider the lightest insult as a sufficient cause for the spilling of blood and the taking of life.—But, leaving these points of controversy for a more fit season, let us see what our basket of provision contains. In truth, friend Latimer, I am one of those whom neither fear nor anxiety deprive of their ordinary appetite."

we found the means of good cheer accordingly, which Mr Geddes seemed to enjoy as much as if it had been eaten in a situation of perfect safety; nay, his conversation appeared to be rather more than on ordinary occasions. After eating our supper, we left our hut together, and walked for a few minutes on the banks of the

It was high water, and the ebb had not yet commenced. The moon shone broad and bright upon the placid face of the Solway Firth, and showed a slight ripple upon the stakes, the tops of which were just visible above the waves, and on the dark-coloured buoys which marked the upper edge of the enclosure of nets. At a much greater distance,—for the estuary is here very wide,—the line of the English coast was seen on the verge of the water, resembling one of the fog-banks on which mariners are said to gaze, uncertain whether it be land or atmospherical delusion.

"We shall be undisturbed for some hours," said Mr Geddes; "they will not come down upon us till the state of the tide permits them to destroy the tide nets. Is it not strange to think that human passions can so soon transform such a tranquil scene as this into one of devastation and confusion?"

It was indeed a scene of exquisite stillness; so much so, that the restless waves of the Solway seemed, if not absolutely to sleep, at least to slumber;—on the shore no night-bird was heard—the cock did not sing his first matins, and we ourselves walked more lightly than by day, as if to suit the sounds of our own paces to the serene tranquillity around us. At length the plaintive cry of a dog broke the silence, and on our return to the cottage, we found that the younger of the three animals which had gone along with John Geddes, unaccustomed, perhaps, to distant journeys, and the duty of keeping to heel, had strayed from the party, and unable to rejoin its mother, had wandered back to the place of its birth.

"Another feeble addition to our feeble garrison," said Mr Geddes, as he caressed the dog, and admitted it into the cottage. "Poor fellow! as thou art incapable of doing any mischief, I hope thou wilt do us none. At least thou mayest do us the good service of a sentinel, and permit us to enjoy a quiet repose, under the certainty that thou wilt alarm us when the enemy is at hand."

There were two beds in the superintendent's room, upon which we threw ourselves. Mr Geddes, with his happy equanimity of temper, was asleep in the first five minutes. I lay for some time in painful and anxious thoughts, watching the fire and the motions of the restless dog, which, disturbed probably at the absence of John Geddes, wandered from the hearth to the door and back again, then came to the bedside and licked my hands and face, and at length, experiencing no repulse to its advances, established itself at my feet, and went to sleep, an example which I soon afterwards followed.

In the rage of narration, my dear Alan—for I will never relinquish the hope that what I am writing may one day reach your hands—I have not forsaken me, even in my confinement, and the extensive length of unimportant details into which I have been hurried, renders it necessary that I commence another sheet. Fortunately, my pigmy characters comprehend a great many words within a small space of paper.

CHAPTER IV.

DARSIE LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THE morning was dawning, and Mr Geddes and I myself still sleeping soundly, when the alarm was given by my canine fellow, who first growled deeply at intervals, and at length bore decided testimony to the approach of some enemy. I opened door of the cottage, and perceived, at the distance of about hundred yards, a small but close column of men, which I would have taken for a dark hedge, but that I could perceive it was advancing rapidly and in silence.

The dog flew towards them, but instantly ran howling back to having probably been chastised by a stick or a stone. Uncertain to the plan of tactics or of treaty which Mr Geddes might think proper to adopt, I was about to retire into the cottage, when suddenly joined me at the door, and slipping his arm through mine, said, "Let us go to meet them manfully; we have done nothing to be ashamed of.—Friends," he said, raising his voice as we approached them, "who and what are you, and with what purpose are you here on my property?"

A loud cheer was the answer returned, and a brace of fiddlers, occupying the front of the march, immediately struck up the insular air, the words of which begin,

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker."

Even at that moment of alarm, I think I recognised the tones of the blind fiddler Will, known by the name of Wandering Willie from his itinerant habits. They continued to advance swiftly and in great order, in their front

"The fiery fiddlers playing martial airs;"

when, coming close up, they surrounded us by a single mover, and there was a universal cry, "Whoop, Quaker—whoop, Quaker! Here have we them both, the wet Quaker and the dry one."

"Hang up the wet Quaker to dry, and wet the dry one with ducking," answered another voice.

"Where is the sea-otter, John Davies, that destroyed more than any sealch upon Ailsay Craig?" exclaimed a third voice. "I have an old crow to pluck with him, and a pock to put the feather on him."

We stood perfectly passive; for, to have attempted resistance against more than a hundred men, armed with guns, fish-spears, iron-crows, spades, and bludgeons, would have been an act of insanity. Mr Geddes, with his strong sonorous voice, answered the question about the superintendent in a manner, the manly independence of which compelled them to attend to him.

"John Davies," he said, "will, I trust, soon be at Dumfries—"

"To fetch down redcoats and dragoons against us, you canting old ain!"

A blow was, at the same time, levelled at my friend, which I parried by interposing the stick I had in my hand. I was instantly buck down, and have a faint recollection of hearing some crying, "Kill the young spy!" and others, as I thought, interposing on my behalf. But a second blow on the head, received in the scuffle, soon deprived me of sense and consciousness, and threw me into a state of insensibility, from which I did not recover immediately. When I did come to myself, I was lying on the bed from which I had just risen before the fray, and my poor companion, the Newfoundland puppy, of courage entirely cowed by the tumult of the riot, had crept as close to me as it could, and lay trembling and whining, as if under the most dreadful terror. I doubted at first whether I had not dreamed of the tumult, until, as I attempted to rise, a feeling of dizziness assured me that the injury I had sustained was too real. I gathered together my senses—listened—and heard at a distance the shouts of the rioters, busy, doubtless, in their work of devastation. I made a second effort to rise, or at least to turn myself, for I lay with my face to the wall of the cottage, but I found my limbs were secured, and my motions effectually prevented—indeed by cords—but by linen or cloth bandages swathed around my ankles, and securing my arms to my sides. Aware of my utterly wretched condition, I groaned betwixt bodily pain and mental distress. A voice by my bedside whispered in a whining tone, "Whisht a-ye, whisht a-ye; haud your tongue, like a gude bairn—ye have us dear aneugh already. My hinny's clean gane now." Nowing, as I thought, the phraseology of the wife of the itinerant musician, I asked her where her husband was, and whether he had been hurt.

"Broken," answered the dame, "all broken to pieces; fit for nought to be made spunks of—the best blood that was in Scotland."

"Broken?—blood?—is your husband wounded; has there been any shed—broken limbs?"

"Broken limbs—I wish," answered the beldam, "that my hinny had broken the best bane in his body, before he had broken his fiddle, for 'twas the best blood in Scotland—it was a cremony, for aught that I care."

"Chaw—only his fiddle?" said I.

"dinna ken what waur your honour could have wished him to do, but he had broken his neck; and this is muckle the same to my Willie, and me. Chaw, indeed! It is easy to say *chaw*, but it is no to gie us onything to *chaw*?—the bread-winner's gane, and we ay e'en sit down and starve."

"O, no," I said, "I will pay you for twenty such fiddles."

"Twenty such! is that a' ye ken about it? the country hadna the credit here and hereafter, where are ye to get the siller?"

"I have enough of money," said I, attempting to reach my hand into my side-pocket "unloose these bandages, and I will pay you at the spot."

This hint appeared to move her, and she was approaching the side, as I hoped, to liberate me from my bonds, when a nearer and more desperate shout was heard, as if the rioters were close by the hut.

"I daurna—I daurna," said the poor woman, "they would murder me and my hinny Willie baith, and they have misguided us ane already;—but if there is anything worldly I could do for your honor, leave out loosin' ye?"

What she said recalled me to my bodily suffering. Agitation, the effects of the usage I had received, had produced a burning thirst. I asked for a drink of water.

"Heaven Almighty forbid that Epps Ainslie should gie ony gentlemen cauld well-water, and him in a fever. Na, na, hinny me alane, I'll do better for ye than the like of that."

"Give me what you will," I replied; "let it but be liquid and cold."

The woman gave me a large horn accordingly, filled with spirit and water, which, without minute inquiry concerning the nature of its contents, I drained at a draught. Either the spirits, taken in that manner, acted more suddenly than usual on my brain, or else there was some drug mixed with the beverage. I remember little of drinking it off, only that the appearance of things around me became indistinct; that the woman's form seemed to multiply itself, and to flit in various figures around me, bearing the same lineaments as herself did. I remember also that the discordant noises and cries of those without the cottage seemed to die away in a hum like that with which a nurse hushes her babe. At length I fell into a sound sleep, or rather a state of absolute insensibility.

I have reason to think this species of trance lasted for many hours, indeed, for the whole subsequent day and part of the night. It was not uniformly so profound, for my recollection of it is chequered by many dreams, all of a painful nature, but too faint and too indistinct to be remembered. At length the moment of waking came, and the sensations were horrible.

A deep sound, which, in the confusion of my senses, I identified with the cries of the rioters, was the first thing of which I was conscious; next, I became conscious that I was carried violently forward in some conveyance, with an unequal motion, which gave me much pain. My position was horizontal, and when I attempted to move my hands in order to find some mode of securing myself against the species of suffering, I found I was bound as before, and the horrible reality rushed on my mind, that I was in the hands of those who had lately committed a great outrage on property, and were now about to kidnap, if not to murder me. I opened my eyes, it was too late—pose—all around me was dark, for a day had passed over during my captivity. A dispiriting sickness oppressed my head—my limbs seemed on fire, while my feet and hands were chilled and benumbed with want of circulation. It was with the utmost difficulty that I recovered in a sufficient degree the power of observing external sounds and circumstances; and when I tried to move, they presented nothing consolatory.

Groping with my hands, as far as the bandages would permit,

ceiving the assistance of some occasional glances of the moonlight, became aware that the carriage in which I was transported was one of the light carts of the country, called *tumblers*, and that a little attention had been paid to my accommodation, as I was laid upon some mats covered with matting, and filled with straw. Without these conditions would have been still more intolerable; for the vehicle, being now on one side, and now on the other, sometimes sticking absolutely fast, and requiring the utmost exertions of the animal which drew it to put it once more in motion, was subjected to jolts in all directions, which were very severe. At other times it rolled lightly and smoothly over what seemed to be wet sand; and, as I heard the distant roar of the tide, I had little doubt that we were passing in passing the formidable estuary which divides the two kingdoms.

There seemed to be at least five or six people about the cart, some on foot, others on horseback; the former lent assistance whenever I was in danger of upsetting, or sticking fast in the quicksand; the others rode before and acted as guides, often changing the direction of the vehicle as the precarious state of the passage required.

I addressed myself to the men around the cart, and endeavoured to move their compassion. I had harmed, I said, no one, and for no reason in my life had deserved such cruel treatment. I had no connection whatever in the fishing-station which had incurred their displeasure, and my acquaintance with Mr Geddes was of a very late date. Lastly, and as my strongest argument, I endeavoured to excite their fears, by informing them that my rank in life would not permit me to be either murdered or secreted with impunity; and to interest them in my avarice, by the promises I made them of reward, if they would effect my deliverance. I only received a scornful laugh in reply to my threats; my promises might have done more, for the fellows were hesitating together as if in hesitation, and I began to reiterate and increase my offers, when the voice of one of the horsemen, who had suddenly come up, enjoined silence to the men on foot, and, approaching the side of the cart, said to me, with a strong and determined tone, "Young man, there is no personal harm designed to you. If you remain silent and quiet you may reckon on good treatment; if you endeavour to tamper with these men in the execution of their duty, I will take such measures for silencing you as you shall remember the longest day you have to live."

I thought I knew the voice which uttered these threats; but, in that situation, my perceptions could not be supposed to be perfectly accurate. I was contented to reply, "Whoever you are that speak to me, I entreat the benefit of the meanest prisoner, who is not to be subjected legally to greater hardship than is necessary for the restraint of his person. I entreat that these bonds, which hurt me so cruelly, may be slackened at least, if not removed altogether." "I will slacken the belts," said the former speaker; "nay, I will altogether remove them, and allow you to pursue your journey in a convenient manner, provided you will give me your word of honour that you will not attempt an escape." "Never!" I answered, with an energy of which despair alone could

have rendered me capable—"I will *never* submit to loss of freedom moment longer than I am subjected to it by force."

"Enough," he replied; the sentiment is natural; but do not your side complain that I, who am carrying on an important undertaking, use the only means in my power for insuring its success."

I entreated to know what it was designed to do with me; but conductor, in a voice of menacing authority, desired me to be silent on my peril; and my strength and spirits were too much exhausted to permit my continuing a dialogue so singular, even if I could have promised myself any good result by doing so.

It is proper here to add, that, from my recollections at the time and from what has since taken place, I have the strongest possible belief that the man with whom I held this expostulation was the singular person residing at Brokenburn, in Dumfriesshire, and called the fishers of that hamlet the Laird of the Solway Lochs. The cause for his inveterate persecution I cannot pretend even to guess at.

In the mean time the cart was dragged heavily and wearily until the nearer roar of the advancing tide excited the apprehension of another danger. I could not mistake the sound, which I had heard upon another occasion, when it was only the speed of a fleet horse which saved me from perishing in the quicksands. Thou, my dear Alan, canst not but remember the former circumstances; and now a wonderful contrast! the very man, to the best of my belief, who then saved me from peril, was the leader of the lawless band who had now deprived me of my liberty. I conjectured that the danger grew imminent; for I heard some words and circumstances which made me aware that a rider hastily fastened his own horse to the shafts of the cart, in order to assist the exhausted animal which drew it, and the vehicle was now pulled forward at a faster pace, which the horses were urged to maintain by blows and curses. The men, however, were inhabitants of the neighbourhood; and I had strong personal reason to believe, that one of them, at least, was intimately acquainted with all the depths and shallows of the perilous paths in which they were engaged. But they were in imminent danger themselves; and if so, as from the whispering and exertions to push on with the cart, it was much to be apprehended, there was little doubt that I should be left behind as a useless encumbrance, and that while I was in a condition which rendered every chance of escape impracticable. There were awful apprehensions; but it pleased Providence to increase them to a point which my brain was scarcely able to endure.

As we approached very near to a black line, which, dimly visible as it was, I could make out to be the shore, we heard two or three sounds, which appeared to be the report of fire-arms. Immediately all was bustle among our party to get forward. Presently a fellow galloped up to us, crying out, "Ware hawk! ware hawk! the Jack-sharks are out from Burgh, and Allonby. Tom will lose his cargo if you do not bear a hand."

Most of my company seemed to make hastily for the shore on receiving this intelligence. A driver was left with the cart; but in length, when, after repeated and hair-breadth escapes, it actually stuck fast in a slough or quicksand, the fellow, with an oath, cut

arness, and, as I presume, departed with the horses, whose feet I heard splashing over the wet sand, and through the shallows, as he galloped off.

The dropping sound of fire-arms was stilled continued, but lost almost entirely in the thunder of the advancing surge. By a desperate effort I raised myself in the cart, and attained a sitting posture, which served only to show me the extent of my danger. There lay my native land—my own England—the land where I was born, and which my wishes, since my earliest age, had turned with all the prejudices of national feeling—there it lay, within a furlong of the place where I yet was; that furlong, which an infant would have crossed over in a minute, was yet a barrier effectual to divide me forever from England and from life. I soon not only heard the roar of this dreadful torrent, but saw, by the fitful moonlight, the foamy crests of the devouring waves, as they advanced with the speed and fury of a pack of hungry wolves.

The consciousness that the slightest ray of hope, or power of struggling, was not left me, quite overcame the constancy which I had hitherto maintained. My eyes began to swim—my head grew dizzy and mad with fear—I chattered and howled to the howling and raging sea. One or two great waves already reached the cart, when the conductor of the party, whom I have mentioned so often, was, as by magic, at my side. He sprang from his horse into the vehicle, cut the ligatures which restrained me, and bade me get up and shout in the fiend's name.

Seeing I was incapable of obeying, he seized me, as if I had been a child of six months old, threw me across the horse, sprung on behind, supporting with one hand, while he directed the animal with the other. In my helpless and painful posture, I was unconscious of the degree of danger which we incurred; but I believe at one time the horse was swimming, or nearly so; and that it was with difficulty that my stern and powerful assistant kept my head above water. I remember particularly the shock which I felt when the animal, endeavouring to gain the bank, reared, and very nearly fell back on his haunches. The time during which I continued in this dreadful condition did not probably exceed two or three minutes, yet so strongly were they marked with horror and agony, that they seem to my recollection a much more considerable space of time.

When I had been thus snatched from destruction, I had only power to say to my protector,—or oppressor,—for he merited either name in my hand, “You do not, then, design to murder me?”

He laughed as he replied, but it was a sort of laughter which I never desire to hear again,—“Else you think I had let the waves do their work? But remember, the shepherd saves his sheep from the wolf—his object is to preserve its life—Be silent, however, with questions and entreaties. What I mean to do thou canst no more discover or prevent than a man, with his bare palm, can scoop dry the Solway.” I was too much exhausted to continue the argument; and, still numb and torpid in all my limbs, permitted myself without reluctance to be placed on a horse brought for the purpose. My formidable conductor rode on the one side, and another person on the other

keeping me upright in the saddle. In this manner we travelled forward at a considerable rate, and by by-roads, with which my attendant seemed as familiar as with the perilous passages of the Solway.

At length, after stumbling through a labyrinth of dark and devious lanes, and crossing more than one rough and barren heath, we found ourselves on the edge of a high-road, where a chaise and four awaited as it appeared, our arrival. To my great relief, we now changed our mode of conveyance; for my dizziness and headache had returned in so strong a degree that I should otherwise have been totally unable to keep my seat on horseback, even with the support which I had received.

My doubted and dangerous companion signed to me to enter the carriage—the man who had ridden on the left side of my horse stepped in after me, and drawing up the blinds of the vehicle, gave the signal for instant departure.

I had obtained a glimpse of the countenance of my new companion as by the aid of a dark lantern the drivers opened the carriage door, and I was well-nigh persuaded that I recognised in him the domestic leader of this party, whom I had seen at his house in Brokenbury on a former occasion. To ascertain the truth of my suspicion, I asked him whether his name was not Cristal Nixon.

"What is other folk's names to you," he replied, gruffly, "who can not tell your own father and mother?"

"You know them, perhaps!" I exclaimed eagerly. "You know them! and with that secret is connected the treatment which I am now receiving? It must be so, for in my life have I never injured any one. Tell me the cause of my misfortunes, or rather help me to my liberty, and I will reward you richly."

"Ay, ay," replied my keeper; "but what use to give you liberty who know nothing how to use it like a gentleman, but spend your time with Quakers and fiddlers, and such like raff! If I was your friend, hem, hem, hem!"

Here Cristal stopped short, just on the point, as it appeared, when some information was likely to escape him. I urged him once more to be my friend, and promised him all the stock of money which I had about me, and it was not inconsiderable, if he would assist in my escape.

He listened, as if to a proposition which had some interest, and replied, but in a voice rather softer than before, "Ay, but men do not catch old birds with chaff, my master. Where have you got your rhino you are so flush of?"

"I will give you earnest directly, and that in bank-notes," said he, but thrusting my hand into my side-pocket, I found my pocket-book was gone. I would have persuaded myself that it was only the numbness of my hands which prevented my finding it; but Cristal Nixon, who bears in his countenance that cynicism which is especially entertained with human misery, no longer suppressed his laughter.

"Oh, ho! my young master," he said; "we have taken good enough care you have not kept the means of bribing poor folk to fidelity. What, man, they have souls as well as other people,

to make them break trust is a deadly sin. And as for me, young gentleman, if you would fill Saint Mary's Kirk with gold, Cristalixon would mind it no more than so many chuckstones."

I would have persisted, were it but in hopes of his letting drop at which it concerned me to know, but he cut off farther communication by desiring me to lean back in the corner and go to sleep.

"Thou art cock-brained enough already," he added, "and we shall have thy young pate addled entirely, if you do not take some natural rest."

I did indeed require repose, if not slumber; the draught which I had taken continued to operate, and satisfied in my own mind that my attempt on my life was designed, the fear of instant death no longer embated the torpor which crept over me—I slept, and slept soundly, but still without refreshment.

When I awoke, I found myself extremely indisposed; images of the past, and anticipations of the future, floated confusedly through my brain. I perceived, however, that my situation was changed, greatly for the better. I was in a good bed, with the curtains drawn round it; I heard the lowered voice, and cautious step of attendants, who seemed to respect my repose; it appeared as if I was in the hands either of friends, or of such as meant me no personal harm.

I can give but an indistinct account of two or three broken and perishing days which succeeded, but if they were chequered with dreams and visions of terror, other and more agreeable objects were sometimes presented. Alan Fairford will understand me when I say I am convinced I saw G. M. during this interval of oblivion. I had medical attendance, and was bled more than once. I also remember a painful operation performed on my head, where I had received a severe blow on the night of the riot. My hair was cut short, and the bone of the skull examined, to discover if the cranium had received any injury.

On seeing the physician, it would have been natural to have appealed to him on the subject of my confinement, and I remember more than once attempting to do so. But the fever lay like a spell on my tongue, and when I would have implored the doctor's assistance, I rambled from the subject, and spoke I know not what nonsense. Some power, which I was unable to resist, seemed to lead me into a different course of conversation from what I intended, and though conscious, in some degree, of the failure, I could not mend it; and resolved, therefore, to be patient, until my capacity of steady thought and expression was restored to me with my ordinary health, which had sustained a severe shock from the vicissitudes to which I had been exposed.¹

See Note P. *Riotous attack upon the Dam-dike of Sir James Graham of Netherby.*

CHAPTER V.

DARSIE LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

Two or three days, perhaps more, perhaps less, had been spent in bed, where I was carefully attended, and treated, I believe, with much judgment as the case required, and I was at length allowed to quit my bed, though not the chamber. I was now more able to make some observation on the place of my confinement.

The room, in appearance and furniture, resembled the best apartment in a farmer's house; and the window, two stories high, looked into a backyard, or court, filled with domestic poultry. There were the usual domestic offices about this yard. I could distinguish the brew-house and the barn, and I heard, from a more remote building, the lowing of the cattle, and other rural sounds, announcing a large and well-stocked farm. These were sights and sounds qualified to dispel any apprehension of immediate violence. Yet the building seemed ancient and strong, a part of the roof was battlemented, and the walls were of great thickness; lastly, I observed, with some unpleasant sensations, that the windows of my chamber had been lately secured with iron stanchions, and that the servants who brought victuals, or visited my apartment to render other menial offices, always locked the door when they retired.

The comfort and cleanliness of my chamber were of true English growth, and such as I had rarely seen on the other side of the Tweed. The very old wainscot, which composed the floor and the panelling of the room, was scrubbed with a degree of labour which the Scottish housewife rarely bestows on her most costly furniture.

The whole apartments appropriated to my use consisted of a bedroom, a small parlour adjacent, within which was a still smaller closet, having a narrow window, which seemed anciently to have been used as a shot-hole, admitting, indeed, a very moderate portion of light and air, but without its being possible to see anything from it except the blue sky, and that only by mounting on a chair. There were appearances of a separate entrance into this cabinet, besides that which communicated with the parlour, but it had been recently built up, as I discovered, by removing a piece of tapestry which covered the fresh mason-work. I found some of my clothes here, with linen and other articles, as well as my writing-case, containing pen, ink, and paper, which enables me, at my leisure (which, I know, is undisturbed enough), to make this record of my confinement. It may be well believed, however, that I do not trust to the security of the bureau, but carry the written sheets about my person, so that I can only be deprived of them by actual violence. I am cautious to write in the little cabinet only, so that I can prevent any person approaching me through the other apartments, and have time enough to put aside my journal before they come upon me.

The servants, a stout country-fellow, and a very pretty milk-maid,

oking lass, by whom I am attended, seem of the true Joan and lodge school, thinking of little, and desiring nothing, beyond the very limited sphere of their own duties or enjoyments, and having no curiosity whatever about the affairs of others. Their behaviour to me in particular, is, at the same time, very kind and very provoking. My table is abundantly supplied, and they seem anxious to comply with my taste in that department. But whenever I make inquiries beyond "what's for dinner," the brute of a lad baffles me by his *anan*, and his *dunna knaw*, and if hard pressed, turns his back on me composedly and leaves the room. The girl, too, pretends to be as simple as he; but an arch grin, which she cannot always suppress, seems to acknowledge that she understands perfectly well the game which she is playing, and is determined to keep me in ignorance. Both of them, and the wench in particular, treat me as they would do a spoiled child, and never directly refuse me anything which I ask, taking care, at the same time, not to make their words good by effectually granting my request. Thus, if I desire to go out, I am promised by Dorcas that I shall walk in the park at night, and see the cows milked, just as she would propose such an amusement to a child. But she takes care never to keep her word, if it is in her power to do so.

In the mean time there has stolen on me insensibly an indifference to my freedom—a carelessness about my situation, for which I am unable to account, unless it be the consequence of weakness and loss of blood. I have read of men who, immured as I am, have surprised the world by the address with which they have successfully overcome the most formidable obstacles to their escape; and when I have heard such anecdotes, I have said to myself, that no one who is possessed only of a fragment of freestone, or a rusty nail, to grind down rivets and to pick locks, having his full leisure to employ in the task, need continue the inhabitant of a prison. Here, however, I sit, day after day, without a single effort to effect my liberation.

Yet my inactivity is not the result of despondency, but arises, in part at least, from feelings of a very different cast. My story, long and mysterious one, seems now upon the verge of some strange development; and I feel a solemn impression that I ought to wait the course of events, to struggle against which is opposing my feeble efforts to the high will of fate. Thou, my Alan, wilt treat as timidity this passive acquiescence, which has sunk down on me like a benumbing horror; but if thou hast remembered by what visions my couch was haunted, and dost but think of the probability that I am in the vicinity, perhaps under the same roof with G. M., thou wilt acknowledge that other feelings than pusillanimity have tended in some degree to reconcile me to my fate.

Still I own it is unmanly to submit with patience to this oppressive confinement. My heart rises against it, especially when I sit down to record my sufferings in this Journal; and I am determined, as the first step to my deliverance, to have my letters sent to the post-house.

I am disappointed. When the girl Dorcas, upon whom I had fixed for a messenger, heard me talk of sending a letter, she willingly offered her services, and received the crown which I gave her (for my purse had not taken flight with the more valuable contents of my pocketbook) with a smile which showed her whole set of white teeth.

But when, with the purpose of gaining some intelligence respecting my present place of abode, I asked to which post-town she was to send or carry the letter, a stolid "*Anan*" showed me she was either ignorant of the nature of a post-office, or that, for the present, she chose to seem so.—"Simpleton!" I said, with some sharpness.

"O Lord, sir!" answered the girl, turning pale, which they always do when I show any sparks of anger,—"*Don't* put yourself in a passion—I'll put the letter in the post."

"What! and not know the name of the post-town?" said I, out of patience. "How on earth do you propose to manage that?"

"La you there, good master. What need you frighten a poor girl that is no schollard, bating what she learned at the Charity-School of Saint Bees?"

"Is Saint Bees far from this place, Dorcas?—Do you send your letters there?" said I, in a manner as insinuating, and yet careless as I could assume.

"Saint Bees!—La, who but a madman—begging your honour's pardon—it's a matter of twenty years since fader lived at Saint Bees, which is twenty, or forty, or I dunna know not how many miles from this part, to the West, on the coast-side; and I would not have left Saint Bees, but that fader——"

"Oh, the devil take your father!" replied I.

To which she answered, "Nay, but thof your honour be a little how-come-so, you shouldn't damn folk's faders; and I won't stand it, for one."

"Oh, I beg you a thousand pardons—I wish your father no ill in the world—he was a very honest man in his way."

"*Was* an honest man!" she exclaimed; for the Cumbrians are, would seem, like their neighbours the Scotch, ticklish on the point of ancestry.—"*He is* a very honest man as ever led nag with halt on head to Staneshaw-Bank Fair—Honest!—He is a horse-couper."

"Right, right," I replied; "I know it—I have heard of your father—as honest as any horse-couper of them all. Why, Dorcas, I mean to buy a horse of him."

"Ah, your honour," sighed Dorcas, "he is the man to serve your honour well—if ever you should get round again—or thof you were a bit off the hooks, he would no more cheat you than——"

"Well, well, we will deal, my girl, you may depend on't. But tell me now, were I to give you a letter, what would you do to get it forwarded?"

"Why, put it into Squire's own bag that hangs in hall," answered poor Dorcas. "What else could I do? He sends it to Brampton or to Carloisle, or where it pleases him, once a-week, and through the gate."

"Ah!" said I; "and I suppose your sweetheart John carries it

Noa—disn't now—and Jan is no sweetheart of mine, ever since danced at his mother's feast with Kitty Rutlege, and let me sit ; that a did."

It was most abominable in Jan, and what I could never have thought of him," I replied.

Oh, but a did though—a let me sit still on my seat, a did."

Well, well, my pretty May, you will get a handsomer fellow than —Jan's not the fellow for you, I see that."

Noa, noa," answered the damsel ; "but he is weel aneugh for a' mon. But I carena a button for him ; for there is the miller's that suitored me last Appleby Fair, when I went wi' oncle, is a y canny lad as you will see in the sunshine."

Ay, a fine stout fellow—Do you think he would carry my letter arlisle."

To Carloisle ! 'Twould be all his life is worth ; he maun wait on and hopper, as they say. Odd, his father would brain him if he t to Carloisle, bating to wrestling for the belt, or sic loike. But ' more bachelors than him ; there is the schoolmaster, can write list as weel as tou canst, mon."

Then he is the very man to take charge of a letter ; he knows the ble of writing one."

Ay, marry does he, an tou comest to that, mon ; only it takes him hours to write as mony lines. Tan, it is a great round hand e, that one can read easily, and not loike your honour's, that are midge's taes. But for ganging to Carloisle, he's dead foundered, as cripple as Eckie's mear."

In the name of God," said I, "how is it that you propose to get letter to the post "

Why, just to put it into Squire's bag loike," reiterated Dorcas ; sends it by Cristal Nixon to post, as you call it, when such is his sure."

ere I was, then, not much edified by having obtained a list of cas's bachelors ; and by finding myself, with respect to any in- nation which I desired, just exactly at the point where I set out. as of consequence to me, however, to accustom the girl to con- se with me familiarly. If she did so, she could not always be on guard, and something, I thought, might drop from her which I d turn to advantage.

Does not the Squire usually look into his letter-bag, Dorcas ? "

I, with as much indifference as I could assume.

That a does," said Dorcas ; "and a threw out a letter of mine to Miller, because a said——"

Well, well, I won't trouble him with mine," said I, "Dorcas ; instead, I will write to himself, Dorcas. But how shall I address ? "

Anan ? " was again Dorcas's resource.

mean how is he called ?—What is his name ? "

Sure your honour should know best," said Dorcas.

I know ?—The devil !—You drive me beyond patience."

Noa, noa ! donna your honour go beyond patience—donna ye " implored the wench. "And for his neame, they say he has

mair nor ane in Westmoreland and on the Scottish side. But I but seldom wi' us, excepting in the cocking season; and then just call him Squoire loike; and so do my measter and dame."

"And is he here at present?" said I.

"Not he, not he; he is a buck-hoonting, as they tell me, so where up the Patterdale way; but he comes and gangs like a fla a whirlwind, or sic loike.

I broke off the conversation, after forcing on Dorcas a little s to buy ribbons, with which she was so much delighted, that she claimed, "God! Cristal Nixon may say his worst on thee; but t art a civil gentleman for all him; and a quoit man wi' woman loike."

There is no sense in being too quiet with women folk, so I add kiss with my crown piece; and I cannot help thinking that I l secured a partisan in Dorcas. At least, she blushed, and pock her little compliment with one hand, while, with the other, she justed her cherry-coloured ribbons, a little disordered by the strug it cost me to attain the honour of a salute.

As she unlocked the door to leave the apartment, she turned b and looking on me with a strong expression of compassion, ad the remarkable words, "La—be'st mad or no, thou'se a mettled after all."

There was something very ominous in the sound of these fare words, which seemed to afford me a clew to the pretext under w I was detained in confinement. My demeanour was probably in enough, while I was agitated at once by the frenzy incident to fever, and the anxiety arising from my extraordinary situation. is it possible they can now establish any cause for confining me a ing out of the state of my mind?

If this be really the pretext under which I am restrained from liberty, nothing but the sedate correctness of my conduct can ren the prejudices which these circumstances may have excited in minds of all who have approached me during my illness. I l heard—dreadful thought!—of men who, for various reasons, l been trepanned into the custody of the keepers of private madho and whose brain, after years of misery, became at length unset through irresistible sympathy with the wretched beings among w they were classed. This shall not be my case, if, by strong inte resolution, it is in human nature to avoid the action of exterior contagious sympathies.

Meantime I sat down to compose and arrange my thoughts, fo purposed appeal to my jailer—so I must call him—whom I addre in the following manner; having at length, and after making sev copies, found language to qualify the sense of resentment w burned in the first draughts of my letter, and endeavoured to ass a tone more conciliating. I mentioned the two occasions on w he had certainly saved my life, when at the utmost peril; a added, that whatever was the purpose of the restraint now prac on me, as I was given to understand, by his authority, it could certainly be with any view to ultimately injuring me. He mig said, have mistaken me for some other person; and I gave him

ount I could of my situation and education, to correct such an
or. I supposed it next possible that he might think me too weak
travelling, and not capable of taking care of myself; and I
ged to assure him that I was restored to perfect health, and
e able to endure the fatigue of a journey. Lastly, I reminded
, in firm though measured terms, that the restraint which I sus-
ed was an illegal one, and highly punishable by the laws which
tect the liberties of the subject. I ended by demanding that he
ld take me before a magistrate; or, at least, that he would
ur me with a personal interview, and explain his meaning with
ard to me.

Perhaps this letter was expressed in a tone too humble for the
ation of an injured man, and I am inclined to think so when I
in recapitulate its tenor. But what could I do? I was in the
er of one whose passions seem as violent as his means of gratify-
them appeared unbounded. I had reason, too, to believe [this to
e, Alan] that all his family did not approve of the violence of his
duct towards me; my object, in fine, was freedom, and who would
sacrifice much to attain it?

I had no means of addressing my letter excepting, "For the
ire's own hand." He could be at no great distance, for in the
rse of twenty-four hours I received an answer. It was addressed
Darsie Latimer, and contained these words:—"You have de-
ended an interview with me. You have required to be carried
ore a magistrate. Your first wish shall be granted—perhaps the
ond also. Meanwhile, be assured that you are a prisoner for the
e, by competent authority, and that such authority is supported
adequate power. Beware, therefore, of struggling with a force
icient to crush you, but abandon yourself to that train of events
which we are both swept along, and which it is impossible that
er of us can resist."

These mysterious words were without signature of any kind, and
me nothing more important to do than to prepare myself for the
eting which they promised. For that purpose I must now break
and make sure of the manuscript,—so far as I can, in my present
dition, be sure of anything,—by concealing it within the lining of
coat, so as not to be found without strict search.

CHAPTER VII.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THE important interview expected at the conclusion of my last
place sooner than I had calculated; for the very day I received
letter, and just when my dinner was finished, the Squire, or
tever he is called, entered the room so suddenly, that I almost
ught I beheld an apparition. The figure of this man is peculiarly
le and stately, and his voice has that deep fullness of accent

which implies unresisted authority. I had risen involuntarily as entered; we gazed on each other for a moment in silence, which was at length broken by my visitor.

"You have desired to see me," he said. "I am here; if you have ought to say, let me hear it; my time is too brief to be consumed in a childish dumb-show."

"I would ask of you," said I, "by what authority I am detained in this place of confinement, and for what purpose?"

"I have told you already," said he, "that my authority is sufficient, and my power equal to it; this is all which it is necessary for you to be present to know."

"Every British subject has a right to know why he suffers such strait," I replied; "nor can he be deprived of liberty without a legal warrant.—Show me that by which you confine me thus."

"You shall see more," he said; "you shall see the magistrate to whom it is granted, and that without a moment's delay."

This sudden proposal fluttered and alarmed me; I felt, nevertheless, that I had the right cause, and resolved to plead it boldly, although I could well have desired a little farther time for preparation. He turned, however, threw open the door of the apartment, and commanded me to follow him. I felt some inclination, when I crossed the threshold of my prison-chamber, to have turned and looked back for it; but I knew not where to find the stairs—had reason to think that the outer-doors would be secured—and, to conclude, so soon as I had quitted the room to follow the proud step of my conductor, I observed that I was dogged by Cristal Nixon, who suddenly appeared within two paces of me, and with whose great personal strength, independent of the assistance he might have received from his master, I saw no chance of contending. I therefore followed, unresistingly, and in silence, along one or two passages of much greater length than consisted with the ideas I had previously entertained of the size of the house. At length a door was flung open, and we entered a large old-fashioned parlour, having coloured glass in the windows, oak panelling on the wall, a huge grate, in which a large fagot of timber smoked under an arched chimney-piece of stone, which bore some armorial device, whilst the walls were adorned with the usual number of heroes in armour, with large wigs instead of helmets, and ladies in sacques, smelling to nosegays.

Behind a long table, on which were several books, sat a small underbred-looking man, wearing his own hair tied in a club, and who, from the quire of paper laid before him, and the pen which he handled at my entrance, seemed prepared to officiate as clerk. As I wish to describe these persons as accurately as possible, I may as well say that he wore a dark-coloured coat, corduroy breeches, and spatterdash. At the upper end of the same table, in an ample easy chair, covered with black leather, reposed a fat personage, about fifty years old, who either was actually a country justice, or was well selected to represent such a character. His leathern breeches were faultless in make, his jockey boots spotless in the varnish, and a handsome and flourishing pair of boot-garters, as they are called, united the one pair of his garments to the other; in fine, a richly-laced scarlet waistcoat.

a purple coat, set off the neat though corpulent figure of the man, and threw an additional bloom upon his plethoric aspect. Suppose he had dined, for it was two hours past noon, and he was using himself, and aiding digestion, with a pipe of tobacco. There was an air of importance in his manner which corresponded to the rural dignity of his exterior, and a habit which he had of throwing out a number of interjectional sounds, uttered with a large variety of intonation running from bass up to treble in a very extraordinary manner, or breaking off his sentences with a cough of his pipe, seemed adopted to give an air of thought and mature deliberation to his opinions and decisions. Notwithstanding this, Alan, it might be *dooted*, as our old Professor used to say, whether the Justice was anything more than an ass. Certainly, he showed a great deference for the legal opinion of his clerk, which might be quite according to the order of things, he seemed to be wonderfully under the command of his brother Squire, if squire or of them were, and indeed much more than was consistent with so much assumed consequence of his own.

Ho—ha—ay—so—so—Hum—Humph—this is the young man, suppose—Hum—ay—seems sickly—Young gentleman, you may be down."

I used the permission given, for I had been much more reduced by my illness than I was aware of, and felt myself really fatigued, and by the few paces I had walked, joined to the agitation I suffered.

And your name, young man, is—humph—ay—ha—what is it?" Darsie Latimer."

Right—ay—humph—very right. Darsie Latimer is the very name—ha—ay—where do you come from?"

From Scotland sir, I replied.

A native of Scotland—a—humph—eh—how is it?"

I am an Englishman by birth, sir."

Right—ay—yes, you are so. But pray, Mr Darsie Latimer, have you always been called by that name, or have you any other? Nick, write down his answers, Nick."

As far as I remember, I never bore any other," was my answer.

How, no?—well, I should not have thought so—Hey, neighbor, would you?"

Here he looked towards the other Squire, who had thrown himself into a chair; and, with his legs stretched out before him, and his arms folded on his bosom, seemed carelessly attending to what was going forward. He answered the appeal of the justice by saying that perhaps the young man's memory did not go back to a very early period.

Ah—eh—ha—you hear the gentleman—Pray, how far may your memory be pleased to run back to?—umph?"

Perhaps, sir, to the age of three years, or a little farther."

And will you presume to say, sir," said the Squire, drawing himself suddenly erect in his seat, and exerting the strength of his powerful voice, "that you *then* bore your present name?"

He was startled at the confidence with which this question was put,

and in vain rummaged my memory for the means of replying. least," I said, "I always remember being called Darsie; child at that early age, seldom get more than their Christian name?"

"Oh, I thought so," he replied, and again stretched himself on seat, in the same lounging posture as before.

"So you were called Darsie in your infancy," said the Justice; "and—hum—ay—when did you first take the name of Latimer?"

"I did not take it, sir; it was given to me."

"I ask you," said the lord of the mansion, but with less severity in his voice than formerly, "whether you can remember that you were ever called Latimer, until you had that name given you in Scotland?"

"I will be candid: I cannot recollect an instance that I was called when in England, but neither can I recollect when the name was first given me; and if anything is to be founded on these questions and my answers, I desire ym early childhood may be taken into consideration."

"Hum—ay—yes," said the Justice; "all that requires consideration shall be duly considered. Young man—eh—I beg to know the name of your father and mother?"

This was galling a wound that has festered for years, and I could not endure the question so patiently as those which preceded it; I replied, "I demand, in my turn, to know if I am before an English Justice of the Peace?"

"His worship, Squire Foxley, of Foxley Hall, has been of quorum these twenty years," said Master Nicholas.

"Then he ought to know, or you, sir, as his clerk, should inform him," said I, "that I am the complainant in this case, and that my complaint ought to be heard before I am subjected to cross-examination."

"Humph—hoy—what, ay—there is something in that, neighbor," said the poor Justice, who, blown about by every wind of doctrine, seemed desirous to attain the sanction of his brother Squire.

"I wonder at you, Foxley," said his firm-minded acquaintance; "how can you render the young man justice unless you know who he is?"

"Ha—yes—egad that's true," said Mr Justice Foxley; "and I am—looking into the matter more closely—there is, eh, upon the whole—nothing at all in what he says—so, sir, you must tell me the father's name, and surname."

"It is out of my power, sir; they are not known to me, since the young man must needs know so much of my private affairs."

The Justice collected a great *afflatus* in his cheeks, which put them up like those of a Dutch cherub, while his eyes seemed flying out of his head, from the effort with which he retained his breath. He then blew it forth with,—"Whew!—Hoom—poof—ha!—not known to your parents, youngster?—Then I must commit you for a vagabond. I warrant you. *Omne ignotum pro terribili*, as we used to say at Appleby school; that is, every one that is not known to the Justice is a rogue and a vagabond. Ha!—ay, you may sneer, sir; but I question if you would have known the meaning of that Latin, unless I had told you."

acknowledged myself obliged for a new edition of the adage, and interpretation which I could never have reached alone—and understood. I then proceeded to state my case with greater confidence. Justice was an ass, that was clear; but it was scarcely possible to be so utterly ignorant as not to know what was necessary to explain a case as mine. I therefore informed him of the riot which had been committed on the Scottish side of the Solway Frith, explained how I came to be placed in my present situation, and trusted of his worship to set me at liberty. I pleaded my cause with as much earnestness as I could, casting an eye from time to time upon the opposite party, who seemed entirely indifferent to all animation with which I accused him.

For the Justice, when at length I had ceased, as really not knowing what more to say in a case so very plain, he replied, “Ho—ay—yes—wonderful! and so this is all the gratitude you show to a good gentleman for the great charge and trouble he hath had in respect to and concerning of you?”

He saved my life, sir, I acknowledge, on one occasion certainly, most probably on two; but his having done so gives him no right over my person. I am not, however, asking for any punishment or reparation; on the contrary, I am content to part friends with the gentleman, whose motives I am unwilling to suppose are bad, though his actions have been, towards me, unauthorised and violent.”

In his moderation, Alan, thou wilt comprehend, was not entirely satisfied by my feelings towards the individual of whom I complained; there were other reasons, in which regard for him had little share. He seemed, however, as if the mildness with which I pleaded my case had more effect upon him than anything I had yet said. He moved to the point of being almost out of countenance; and took a deep breath repeatedly, as if to gain time to stifle some degree of emotion. As to Justice Foxley, on whom my eloquence was particularly calculated to make impression, the result was much less favourable. He consulted in a whisper with Mr. Nicholas his clerk—psshawed, sneezed, and elevated his eyebrows, as if in scorn of my supplication. At length, having apparently made up his mind, he leaned back in his chair, and smoked his pipe with great energy, with a look of defiance, intended to make me aware that all my reasoning was lost on him.

At length, when I stopped, more from lack of breath than want of argument, he opened his oracular jaws, and made the following reply, interrupted by his usual interjectional ejaculations, and by long puffs of smoke;—“Hem—ay—eh—poof—And, youngster, do you think Matthew Foxley, who has been one of the quorum for these twenty years, is to be come over with such trash as would hardly be put upon an apple-woman?—Poof—poof—eh! Why, man—eh—dost thou not know the charge is not a bailable matter—and that—hum—of the greatest man—poof—the Baron of Graystock himself, is now stand committed? and yet you pretend to have been kidnapped by a gentleman, and robbed of property, and what not; and—eh—f—you would persuade me all you want is to get away from me—I do believe—eh—that it is all you want. Therefore, as you are a sort of a slip-string gentleman, and—ay—hum—a kind of idle

apprentice, and something cock-brained withal, as the honest folks the house tell me—why, you must e'en remain under custody of your guardian, till your coming of age, or my Lord Chancellor's warrant shall give you the management of your own affairs, which, if you gather your brains again, you will even then not be—ay—hem—p—in particular haste to assume."

The time occupied by his worship's hums, and haws, and puffing tobacco smoke, together with the slow and pompous manner which he spoke, gave me a minute's space to collect my ideas, dispersed as they were by the extraordinary purport of this announcement.

"I cannot conceive, sir," I replied, "by what singular tenure a person claims my obedience as a guardian; it is a barefaced impudence—I never in my life saw him, until I came unhappily to this country, about four weeks since."

"Ay, sir—we—eh—know, and are aware—that—poof—you do like to hear some folk's names; and that—eh—you understand me—there are things, and sounds, and matters, conversation about names and suchlike, which put you off the hooks—which I have no hum to witness. Nevertheless, Mr Darsie—or—poof—Mr Darsie Latimer—or—poof, poof—eh—ay, Mr Darsie without the Latimer—have acknowledged as much to-day as assures me you will best be disposed of under the honourable care of my friend here—all my confessions—besides that—poof—eh—I know him to be a most responsible person—a—hay—ay—most responsible and honourable person—Can you deny this?"

"I know nothing of him," I repeated; "not even his name; and have not, as I told you, seen him in the course of my whole life, a few weeks since."

"Will you swear to that?" said the singular man, who seemed to await the result of this debate, secure as a rattlesnake is of the prey which has once felt its fascination. And while he said these words in deep under-tone, he withdrew his chair a little behind that of Justice, so as to be unseen by him or his clerk, who sat upon the same side; while he bent on me a frown so portentous, that no man who has witnessed the look can forget it during the whole of his life. The furrows of the brow above the eyes became livid, almost black, and were bent into a semicircular, or rather elliptical form, above the junction of the eyebrows. I had heard such a look described in an old tale of *diablerie*, which it was my chance to have entertained with not long since; when this deep and gloomy contraction of the frontal muscles was not unaptly described, as forming a representation of a small horse-shoe.

The tale, when told, awaked a dreadful vision of infancy, which withering and blighting look now fixed on me again forced on my recollection, but with much more vivacity. Indeed I was so much surprised, and, I must add, terrified, at the vague ideas which were awakened in my mind by this fearful sign, that I kept my eyes fixed on the face in which it was exhibited, as on a frightful vision; and passing his handkerchief a moment across his countenance, the mysterious man relaxed at once the look which had for me some-

ppalling. "The young man will no longer deny that he has seen before," said he to the Justice, in a tone of complacency; "and must he will now be reconciled to my temporary guardianship, which may end better for him than he expects."

"Whatever I expect," I replied, summoning my scattered recollections together, "I see I am neither to expect justice nor protection from this gentleman, whose office it is to render both to the lieges. You, sir, how strangely you have wrought yourself into the fate of an unhappy young man, or what interest you can pretend in me, yourself only can explain. That I have seen you before is certain; for none can forget the look with which you seem to have the power of blighting those upon whom you cast it."

The Justice seemed not very easy under this hint. "Ha!—ay," said; "it is time to be going, neighbour: I have a many miles to go, and I care not to ride darkling in these parts.—You and I, Mr Nicholas, must be jogging."

The Justice fumbled with his gloves, in endeavouring to draw them hastily, and Mr Nicholas bustled to get his great-coat and whip. The landlord endeavoured to detain them, and spoke of supper and wine. Both pouring forth many thanks for his invitation, seemed as if they would much rather not; and Mr Justice Foxley was making a score of apologies, with at least a hundred cautionary hems and whs, when the girl Dorcas burst into the room, and announced a gentleman on justice business.

"What gentleman?—and whom does he want?"

"He is cuome post on his ten toes," said the wench; "and on justice-business to his worship loike. I've uphald him a gentleman, for he speaks as good Latin as the schulemeaster; but, lack-a-day! he's gotten a queer mop of a wig."

The gentleman, thus announced and described, bounced into the room. But I have already written as much as fills a sheet of my paper, and my singular embarrassments press so hard on me that I cannot matter to fill another from what followed the intrusion of—my crazy Alan—your crazy client—Poor Peter Peebles!

CHAPTER VIII.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

Sheet 2.

HAVE rarely in my life, till the last alarming days, known what it was to sustain a moment's real sorrow. What I called such, was, I am now well convinced, only the weariness of mind, which, having nothing actually present to complain of, turns upon itself, and becomes anxious about the past and the future; those periods with which human life has so little connection, that Scripture itself hath said, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

If, therefore, I have sometimes abused prosperity, by murmuring at my unknown birth and uncertain rank in society, I will mend myself by bearing my present real adversity with patience and courage, and, if I can, even with gaiety. What can they—dare they do to me?—Foxley, I am persuaded, is a real Justice of Peace, a country gentleman of estate, though (wonderful to tell!) he is an attorney notwithstanding; and his functionary in the drab coat must have made a shrewd guess at the consequences of being accessory to an act of murder or kidnapping. Men invite not such witnesses to deeds of darkness. I have also—Alan, I *have* hopes, arising out of the fall of the oppressor himself. I am encouraged to believe that G. M. is likely again to enter on the field. More I dare not here say; must I drop a hint which another eye than thine might be able to construe. Enough, my feelings are lighter than they have been, and, though fear and wonder are still around me, they are unavailing entirely to overcloud the horizon.

Even when I saw the spectral form of the old scarecrow of the Parliament-House rush into the apartment where I had undergone so singular an examination, I thought of thy connection with it, and could almost have parodied Lear—

“Death!—nothing could have thus subdued nature
To such a lowness, but his ‘learned lawyers.’”

He was even as we have seen him of yore, Alan, when, rather to lose thee company than to follow my own bent, I formerly frequented the halls of justice. The only addition to his dress, in the capacity of a traveller, was a pair of boots, that seemed as if they might have been in the field of Sheriff-moor; so large and heavy, that tied as they were to the creature's wearied hams with large bunches of worsted tape of various colours, they looked as if he had been dragging them along either for a wager, or by way of penance.

Regardless of the surprised looks of the party on whom he intruded himself, Peter blundered into the middle of the apartment with his head charged like a ram's in the act of butting, and saluted them thus:—

“Gude day to ye, gude day to your honours—Is't here they have the fugie warrants?”

I observed that on his entrance, my friend—or enemy—drew himself back, and placed himself as if he would rather avoid attracting observation of the new-comer. I did the same myself, as far as was able; for I thought it likely that Mr Peebles might recognize me, as indeed I was too frequently among the group of young judicial aspirants who used to amuse themselves by putting cases on Peter's solution, and playing him worse tricks; yet I was uncertain whether I had better avail myself of our acquaintance to have an advantage, such as it might be, of his evidence before the magistrate, or whether to make him, if possible, bearer of a letter which might procure me more effectual assistance. I resolved, therefore, to be guided by circumstances, and to watch carefully that nothing might escape me. I drew back as far as I could, and even reconnoitred the door and passage, to consider whether absolute escape might

practicable. But there paraded Cristal Nixon, whose little black s, sharp as those of a basilisk, seemed, the instant when they ountered mine, to penetrate my purpose.

sat down, as much out of sight of all parties as I could, and listened to the dialogue which followed—a dialogue how much more interesting to me than any I could have conceived, in which Peter Peebles was to be one of the *Dramatis Personæ*!

Is it here where ye sell the warrants—the fugies, ye ken?” said Peter.

Hey—eh—what!” said Justice Foxley; “what the devil does the ow mean?—What would you have a warrant for?”

It is to apprehend a young lawyer that is *in meditatione fugæ*; he has ta'en my memorial and pleaded my cause, and a good fee ave him, and as muckle brandy as he could drink that day at his nder's house—he loes the brandy ower weel for sae youthful a ature.”

And what has this drunken young dog of a lawyer done to you, t you are come to me—eh—ha? Has he robbed you? Not unely, if he be a lawyer—eh—Nick—ha?” said Justice Foxley.

He has robbed me of himself, sir,” answered Peter; “of his p, comfort, aid, maintenance, and assistance, whilk, as a counsel a client, he is bound to yield me *ratione officii*—that is it, ye see. has pouched my fee, and drucken a mutchkin of brandy, and now s ower the march, and left my cause, half won half lost—as dead eat as e'er was run ower the back-sands. Now, I was advised by e cunning laddies that are used to crack a bit law wi' me in the use, that the best thing I could do was to take heart o' grace and out after him; so I have taken post on my ain shanks, forby a t in a cart, or the like. I got wind of him in Dumfries, and now ave run him ower to the English side, and I want a fugie warrant ainst him.”

How did my heart throb at this information, dearest Alan! Thou near me then, and I well know with what kind purpose; thou st abandoned all to fly to my assistance; and no wonder that, knowing thy friendship and faith, thy sound sagacity and persevering position, “my bosom's lord should now sit lightly on his throne;” t gaiety should almost involuntarily hover on my pen; and that heart should beat like that of a general, responsive to the drums his advancing ally, without whose help the battle must have been t.

did not suffer myself to be startled by this joyous surprise, but stinued to bend my strictest attention to what followed, among this gular party. That Poor Peter Peebles had been put on this wild- ose chase, by some of his juvenile advisers in the Parliament House, himself had intimated; but he spoke with much confidence, and the tice, who seemed to have some secret apprehension of being put ouble in the matter, and, as sometimes occurs on the English ntier, a jealousy lest the superior acuteness of their northern ighbours might overreach their own simplicity, turned to his clerk a perplexed countenance.

Eh—oh—Nick—d—n thee—Hast thou got nothing to say? This

is more Scots law, I take it, and more Scotsmen." (Here he cast a side-glance at the owner of the mansion, and winked to his clerk.) "would Solway were as deep as it is wide, and we had then some chance of keeping of them out."

Nicholas conversed an instant aside with the supplicant, and then reported;—

"The man wants a border-warrant, I think; but they are only granted for debt—now he wants one to catch a lawyer."

"And what for no?" answered Peter Peebles, doggedly; "why for no, I would be glad to ken? If a day's labourer refuse to work ye'll grant a warrant to gar him do out his daurg—if a wench queirin away from her hairst, ye'll send her back to her heuck again if sae mickle as a collier or a salter make a moonlight flitting, will cleek him by the back-spaul in a minute of time,—and yet the damage canna amount to mair than a creelfu' of coals, and a for or twa of saut; and here is a chield taks leg from his engagement and damages me to the tune of sax thousand pund sterling; that three thousand that I should win, and three thousand mair that I am like to lose; and you that ca' yourself a justice canna help a poor man to catch the rinaway? A bonny like justice I am like to get amang ye!"

"The fellow must be drunk," said the clerk.

"Black fasting from all but sin," replied the supplicant; "I have had mair than a mouthful of cauld water since I passed the Border, and deil a ane of ye is like to say to me, 'Dog, will ye drink?'"

The Justice seemed moved by this appeal. "Hem—tush man," replied he; "thou speak'st to us as if thou wert in presence of one of thine own beggarly justices—get down stairs—get something to eat, man (with permission of my friend to make so free in his house) and a mouthful to drink, and I warrant we get ye such justice as will please ye."

"I winna refuse your neighbourly offer," said Poor Peter Peebles, making his bow; "muckle grace be wi' your honour, and wisdom to guide you in this extraordinary cause."

When I saw Peter Peebles about to retire from the room, I could not forbear an effort to obtain from him such evidence as might give me some credit with the Justice. I stepped forward, therefore, and saluting him, asked him if he remembered me?"

After a stare or two, and a long pinch of snuff, recollection seemed suddenly to dawn on Peter Peebles. "Recollect ye!" he said; "my troth do I.—Haud him a grip, gentlemen!—constables, keep him fast! where that ill-deedy hempy is, ye are sure that Alan Fairford is not far off.—Haud him fast, Master Constable; I charge ye wi' him for I am mista'en if he is not at the bottom of this rinaway business. He was aye getting the silly callant Alan awa wi' gigs, and horse, and the like of that, to Roslin, and Prestonpans, and a' the idle gates he could think of. He's a rinaway apprentice, that ane."

"Mr Peebles," I said, "do not do me wrong. I am sure you can say no harm of me justly, but can satisfy these gentlemen, if you will, that I am a student of law in Edinburgh—Darsie Latimer by name."

"Me satisfy! how can I satisfy the gentlemen," answered Peter

at am sae far from being satisfied mysell? I ken naething about
name, and can only testify, *nihil novit in causa*."

A pretty witness you have brought forward in your favour," said
Foxley. "But—ha—ay—I'll ask him a question or two.—Pray,
ad, will you take your oath to this youth being a runaway appren-
?"

Sir," said Peter, "I will make oath to onything in reason; when
se comes to my oath it's a won cause: But I am in some haste to
your worship's good cheer;" for Peter had become much more
ectful in his demeanour towards the Justice, since he had heard
e intimation of dinner.

You shall have—eh—hum—ay—a bellyful, if it be possible to fill
First let me know if this young man be really what he pretends.
ick, make his affidavit."

Ow, he is just a wud harum-scarum creature, that wad never take
is studies; daft, sir, clean daft."

Deft!" said the Justice; "what d'ye mean by deft—eh?"

Just Ffish," replied Peter; "wowf—a wee bit by the East-Nook
ae; it's a common case—the ae half of the world thinks the tither
. I have met with folk in my day that thought I was daft mysell;
for my part, I think our Court of Session clean daft, that have
the great cause of Peebles against Plainstanes before them for this
e of years, and have never been able to ding the bottom out of it yet."
I cannot make out a word of his cursed brogue," said the Cum-
n justice; "can you, neighbour—eh? What can he mean by
?"

He means *mad*," said the party appealed to, thrown off his guard
mpatience of this protracted discussion.

Ye have it—ye have it," said Peter; "that is, not clean skivie,
—"

Here he stopped, and fixed his eye on the person he addressed
an air of joyful recognition.—Ay, ay, Mr Herries of Birren-
k, is this your ainsell in blood and bane? I thought ye had been
ged at Kennington Common, or Hairiebie, or some of these
es, after the bonny ploy ye made in the forty-five."

I believe you are mistaken, friend," said Herries, sternly, with
se name and designation I was thus made unexpectedly ac-
inted.

The deil a bit," answered the undaunted Peter Peebles; "I mind
veel, for ye lodged in my house the great year of forty-five, for a
at year it was; the Grand Rebellion broke out, and my cause—
great cause—Peebles against Plainstanes, *et per contra*—was
ed in the beginning of the winter Session. and would have been
rd, but that there was a surcease of justice, with your plaids,
your piping, and your nonsense."

I tell you, fellow," said Herries, yet more fiercely, "you have con-
d me with some of the other furniture of your crazy pate."

Speak like a gentleman, sir," answered Peebles; "these are not
d phrases, Mr Herries of Birrenswork. Speak in form of law,
sall bid ye gude day, sir. I have nae pleasure in speaking to
ad folk, though I am willing to answer onything in a legal way;

so if you are for a crack about auld langsyne, and the splores th you and Captain Redgimlet used to breed in my house, and the girded cask of brandy that ye drank and ne'er thought of paying f it (not that I minded it muckle in thae days, though I have felt lack of it sin syne), why I will waste an hour on ye at any time.—An where is Captain Redgimlet now? he was a wild chap, like yours though they arena sae keen after you poor bodies for these some yea bygane; the heading and hanging is weel ower now—awful job awful job—will ye try my sneeshing?”

He concluded his desultory speech by thrusting out his large bon paw, filled with a Scottish mull of huge dimensions, which Herrie who had been standing like one petrified by the assurance of the unexpected address, rejected with a contemptuous motion of his hand which spilled some of the contents of the box.

“Aweel, aweel,” said Peter Peebles, totally unabashed by the repulse, “e'en as ye like, a wilful man maun hae his way; but,” he added, stooping down and endeavouring to gather the spilled snuff from the polished floor, “I canna afford to loose my sneeshing for that ye are gumple-foisted wi' me.”

My attention had been keenly awakened, during this extraordinary and unexpected scene. I watched, with as much attention as my own agitation permitted me to command, the effect produced on the parties concerned. It was evident that our friend, Peter Peebles had unwarily let out something which altered the sentiments of Justice Foxley and his clerk towards Mr Herries, with whom, until he was known and acknowledged under that name, they had appeared to be so intimate. They talked with each other aside, looked at the paper or two which the clerk selected from the contents of a huge black pocketbook, and seemed, under the influence of fear and uncertainty, totally at a loss what line of conduct to adopt.

Herries made a different and far more interesting figure. However little Peter Peebles might resemble the angel Ithuriel, the appearance of Herries, his high and scornful demeanour, vexed by what seemed detection, yet fearless of the consequences, and regarding the whispering magistrate and his clerk with looks in which contempt predominated over anger or anxiety, bore, in my opinion, a slight resemblance to

———“the regal port
And faded splendour wan”—

with which the poet has invested the detected King of the powers of the air.

As he glanced round, with a look which he had endeavoured to compose to haughty indifference, his eye encountered mine, and, thought, at the first glance sunk beneath it. But he instantly rallied his natural spirit, and returned me one of those extraordinary looks by which he could contort so strangely the wrinkles on his forehead. I started; but, angry at myself for my pusillanimity, I answered him by a look of the same kind, and catching the reflection of my countenance in a large antique mirror which stood before me, I started again at the real or imaginary resemblance which my countenance, at that moment, bore to that of Herries. Surely my fate is somehow

ngely interwoven with that of this mysterious individual. I had time at present to speculate upon the subject, for the subsequent conversation demanded all my attention.

The Justice addressed Herries, after a pause of about five minutes, which all parties seemed at some loss how to proceed. He spoke in embarrassment, and his faltering voice, and the long intervals which divided his sentences, seemed to indicate fear of him whom he addressed.

"Neighbour," he said, "I could not have thought this; or, if I—*did* think—in a corner of my own mind as it were—that you, I—that you might have unluckily engaged in—eh—the matter of forty-five—there was still time to have forgot all that."

"And is it so singular that a man should have been out in the y-five?" said Herries, with contemptuous composure;—"your er, I think, Mr Foxley, was out with Derwentwater in the fifteen."

"And lost half of his estate," answered Foxley, with more rapidity than usual; "and was very near—hem—being hanged into the t. But this is—another guess job—for—eh—fifteen is not forty—; and my father had a remission, and you, I take it, have none."

"Perhaps I have," said Herries, indifferently; "or if I have not, n but in the case of half a dozen others whom government do not think worth looking after at this time of day, so they give no offence disturbance."

"But you have given both, sir," said Nicholas Faggot, the clerk, o, having some petty provincial situation, as I have since understood, deemed himself bound to be zealous for government. "Mr Justice Foxley cannot be answerable for letting you pass free, now r name and surname have been spoken plainly out. There are warrants out against you from the Secretary of State's office."

"A proper allegation, Mr Attorney! that, at the distance of so ny years, the Secretary of State should trouble himself about the unfortunate relics of a ruined cause," answered Mr Herries.

"But if it be so," said the clerk, who seemed to assume more confidence upon the composure of Herries's demeanour; "and if cause has been given by the conduct of a gentleman himself, who hath been, s alleged, raking up old matters, and mixing them with new subjects of disaffection—I say, if it be so, I should advise the party, in wisdom, to surrender himself quietly into the lawful custody of the next Justice of Peace—Mr Foxley, suppose—where, and by whom, the matter should be regularly inquired into. I am only putting a e," he added, watching with apprehension the effect which his words were likely to produce upon the party to whom they were addressed.

"And were I to receive such advice," said Herries, with the same composure as before—"putting the case, as you say, Mr Faggot—should request to see the warrant which countenanced such a scandalous proceeding."

Mr Nicholas, by way of answer, placed in his hand a paper, and seemed anxiously to expect the consequences which were to ensue.

Herries looked it over with the same equanimity as before, and n continued. "And were such a scrawl as this presented to me in

my own house, I would throw it into the chimney, and Mr Faggot upon the top of it."

Accordingly, seconding the word with the action, he flung the warrant into the fire with one hand, and fixed the other, with a steady and irresistible gripe, on the breast of the attorney, who, totally unable to contend with him, in either personal strength or mental energy, trembled like a chicken in the raven's clutch. He got up, however, for the fright; for Herries, having probably made him fully sensible of the strength of his grasp, released him, with a scornful laugh.

"Deforcement—spulzie—stouthrief—masterful rescue!" exclaimed Peter Peebles, scandalised at the resistance offered to the law in the person of Nicholas Faggot. But his shrill exclamations were drowned in the thundering voice of Herries, who, calling upon Cristal Nixon, ordered him to take the bawling fool down stairs, fill his belly, and then give him a guinea, and thrust him out of doors. Under such circumstances, Peter easily suffered himself to be withdrawn from the scene.

Herries then turned to the Justice, whose visage, wholly abandoned by the rubicund hue which so lately beamed upon it, hung out the same pale livery as that of his dismayed clerk. "Old friend and acquaintance," he said, "you came here at my request, on a friendly errand, to convince this silly young man of the right which I have over his person for the present. I trust you do not intend to make your visit the pretext of disquieting me about other matters? As the world knows that I have been living at large, in these northern counties, for some months, not to say years, and might have been apprehended at any time, had the necessities of the state required, or my own behaviour deserved it. But no English magistrate has been ungenerous enough to trouble a gentleman under misfortune on account of political opinions and disputes, which have been long ended by the success of the reigning powers. I trust, my good friend, you will not endanger yourself, by taking any other view of the subject than you have done ever since we were acquainted?"

The justice answered with more readiness, as well as more spirit than usual, "Neighbour Ingoldsby—what you say—is—eh—in some sort true; and when you were coming and going at markets, horse races, and cock-fights, fairs, hunts, and suchlike—it was—eh—neither my business nor my wish to dispel—I say—to inquire into and dispel the mysteries which hung about you; for while you were a good companion in the field, and over a bottle now and then—I did not—eh—think it necessary to ask—into your private affairs. And if I thought you were—ahem—somewhat unfortunate in former undertakings, and enterprises, and connections, which might cause you to live unsettledly and more private, I could have—eh—very little pleasure—to aggravate your case by interfering, or requiring explanations, which are often more easily asked than given. But when there are warrants and witnesses to names—and those names Christian and surname, belong to—eh—an attainted person—charge—I trust falsely—with—ahem—taking advantage of modern broil and heart-burnings to renew our civil disturbances, the case is altered; and I must—ahem—do my duty."

the Justice got on his feet as he concluded this speech, and looked old as he could. I drew close beside him and his clerk, Mr Fag—thinking the moment favourable for my own liberation, and intended to Mr Foxley my determination to stand by him. But Mr Herries only laughed at the menacing posture which we assumed. “My good neighbour,” said he, “you talk of a witness—Is yon crazy man a fit witness in an affair of this nature?”

“But you do not deny that you are Mr Herries of Birrenswork, mentioned in the Secretary of State’s warrant?” said Mr Foxley.

“How can I deny or own anything about it?” said Herries, with a sneer. “There is no such warrant in existence now; its ashes, the poor traitor whose doom it threatened, have been dispersed by the four winds of heaven. There is now no warrant in the world.”

“But you will not deny,” said the Justice, “that you were the person named in it; and that—eh—your own act destroyed it?”

“I will neither deny my name nor my actions, Justice,” replied Mr Herries, “when called upon by competent authority to avow or deny them. But I will resist all impertinent attempts either to interfere into my private motives, or to control my person. I am quite prepared to do so; and I trust that you, my good neighbour and my sportsman, in your expostulation, and my friend Mr Nicholas—aggot here, in his humble advice and petition that I should surrender myself, will consider yourselves as having amply discharged your duty to King George and Government.”

The cold and ironical tone in which he made this declaration; the manner and attitude, so nobly expressive of absolute confidence in his superior strength and energy, seemed to complete the indecision which had already shown itself on the side of those whom he addressed.

The Justice looked to the Clerk—the Clerk to the Justice; the former *ha’d, eh’d*, without bringing forth an articulate syllable; the latter only said, “As the warrant is destroyed, Mr Justice, I presume you do not mean to proceed with the arrest?”

“Hum—ay—why, no—Nicholas—it would not be quite advisable—as the Forty-five was an old affair—and—hem—as my friend Nicholas will, I hope, see his error—that is, if he has not seen it already and renounce the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender—I mean no more, neighbour—I think we—as we have no *posse*, or constables, or the like—should order our horses—and, in one word, look the matter over.”

“Judiciously resolved,” said the person whom this decision affected; “but before you go, I trust you will drink and be friends?”

“Why,” said the Justice, rubbing his brow, “our business has been somewhat—rather a thirsty one.”

“Cristal Nixon,” said Mr Herries, “let us have a cool tankard of stout, large enough to quench the thirst of the whole commis-

While Cristal was absent on this genial errand, there was a pause, which I endeavoured to avail myself, by bringing back the discourse to my own concerns. “Sir,” I said to Justice Foxley, “I have direct business with your late discussion with Mr Herries, only

just thus far—You leave me, a loyal subject of King George, an unwilling prisoner in the hands of a person whom you have reason to believe unfriendly to the King's cause. I humbly submit that this is contrary to your duty as a magistrate, and that you ought to make Mr Herries aware of the illegality of his proceedings, and take steps for my rescue, either upon the spot, or, at least, as soon as possible after you have left this case——”

“Young man,” said Mr Justice Foxley, “I would have you remember you are under the power, the lawful power—ahem—of your guardian.”

“He calls himself so, indeed,” I replied; “but he has shown no evidence to establish so absurd a claim; and if he had, his circumstances, as an attainted traitor excepted from pardon, would not give him such a right if it existed.—I do therefore desire you, Mr Justice, and you, his clerk, to consider my situation, and afford me relief at your peril.”

“Here is a young fellow, now,” said the Justice, with much embarrassed looks, “thinks that I carry the whole statute law of England in my head, and a *posse comitatus* to execute them in my pocket. Why, what good would my interference do?—but—hum—eh—I will not speak to your guardian in your favour.”

He took Mr Herries aside, and seemed indeed to urge something upon him with much earnestness; and perhaps such a species of intercession was all which, in the circumstances, I was entitled to expect from him.

They often looked at me as they spoke together; and as Cristina Nixon entered with a huge four-pottle tankard, filled with the beverage his master had demanded, Herries turned away from Mr Foxley somewhat impatiently, saying with emphasis, “I give you my word of honour that you have not the slightest reason to apprehend anything on his account.” He then took up the tankard, and saying aloud in Gaelic, “*Slaint an Rey*,”¹ just tasted the liquor, and handed the tankard to Justice Foxley, who, to avoid the dilemma of pledging him to what might be the Pretender's health, drank to Mr Herries's own, with much pointed solemnity, but in a draught far less moderate.

The clerk imitated the example of his principal, and I was fain to follow their example, for anxiety and fear are at least as thirsty as sorrow is said to be. In a word, we exhausted the composition of ale, sherry, lemon-juice, nutmeg, and other good things, stranded upon the silver bottom of the tankard the huge toast, as well as the roasted orange, which had whileome floated jollily upon the brim, and rendered legible Dr Byrom's celebrated lines engraved thereon—

“God bless the King!—God bless the Faith's defender!
God bless—No harm in blessing the Pretender,
Who that Pretender is, and who that King,—
God bless us all!—is quite another thing.”

I had time enough to study this effusion of the Jacobite muse

¹ The King's health.

the Justice was engaged in the somewhat tedious ceremony of taking leave. That of Mr Faggot was less ceremonious; but I suspected something besides empty compliment passed betwixt him and Herries; for I remarked that the latter slipped a piece of paper into the hand of the former, which might perhaps be a little atonement for the rashness with which he had burnt the warrant, and imposed no gentle hand on the respectable minion of the law by whom it was exhibited; and I observed that he made this propitiation in a manner as to be secret from the worthy clerk's principal. When this was arranged the party took leave of each other, with a formality on the part of Squire Foxley, amongst whose adieus the following phrase was chiefly remarkable:—"I presume you do not intend to stay long in these parts?"

Not for the present, Justice, you may be sure; there are good reasons to the contrary. But I have no doubt of arranging my affairs so that we shall speedily have sport together again."

I went to wait upon the Justice to the courtyard; and, as he did command Crisal Nixon to see that I returned into my apartment. Knowing it would be to no purpose to resist or tamper with this stubborn functionary, I obeyed in silence, and was once more a prisoner in my former quarters.

CHAPTER IX.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

SPENT more than an hour, after returning to the apartment which I may call my prison, in reducing to writing the singular circumstances which I had just witnessed. Methought I could now form a guess at the character of Mr Herries, upon whose name and action the late scene had thrown considerable light;—one of those political Jacobites, doubtless, whose arms, not twenty years since, had shaken the British throne, and some of whom, though their party was diminished in numbers, energy, and power, retained still an intention to renew the attempt they had found so desperate. He was perfectly different from the sort of zealous Jacobites whom it had been my luck hitherto to meet with. Old ladies of family over tea, and grey-haired lairds over their punch, I had often heard utter a little harmless treason; while the former remembered having led down a dance with the Chevalier, and the latter recounted feats they had performed at Preston, Clifton, and Falkirk.

The disaffection of such persons was too unimportant to excite the attention of government. I had heard, however, that there still existed partisans of the Stewart family, of a more daring and dangerous description; men who, furnished with gold from Rome, moved secretly and in disguise through the various classes of society, and strove to keep alive the expiring zeal of their party.

I had no difficulty in assigning an important post among this class

of persons, whose agency and exertion are only doubted by those who look on the surface of things, to this Mr Herries, whose mental energies, as well as his personal strength and activity, seemed to qualify him well to act so dangerous a part; and I knew that, all along the Western Border, both in England and Scotland, there are so many Nonjurors, that such a person may reside there with absolute safety unless it becomes, in a very especial degree, the object of the government to secure his person; and which purpose, even then, might be disappointed by early intelligence, or, as in the case of Mr Foxley, by the unwillingness of provincial magistrates to interfere in what is now considered an invidious pursuit of the unfortunate.

There have, however, been rumours lately, as if the present state of the nation, or at least of some discontented provinces, agitated by a variety of causes, but particularly by the unpopularity of the present administration, may seem to this species of agitators a favourable period for recommencing their intrigues; while, on the other hand, government may not, at such a crisis, be inclined to look upon them with the contempt which a few years ago would have been the most appropriate punishment.

That men should be found rash enough to throw away their services and lives in a desperate cause, is nothing new in history, which abounds with instances of similar devotion—that Mr Herries is such an enthusiast, is no less evident; but all this explains not his conduct towards *me*. Had he sought to make me a proselyte to his ruinous cause, violence and compulsion were arguments very unlikely to prevail with any generous spirit. But even if such were his object, of what use to him could be the acquisition of a single reluctant partisan, who could bring only his own person to support any quarrel which he might adopt? He had claimed over me the rights of a guardian; he had more than hinted that I was in a state of minority which could not dispense with the authority of such a person. Was this man, so sternly desperate in his purpose,—he who seemed willing to take on his own shoulders the entire support of a cause which had been ruinous to thousands,—was he the person that had the power of deciding on my fate? Was it from him those dangers flowed, to secure me against which I had been educated under such circumstances of secrecy and precaution?

And if this was so, of what nature was the claim which he asserted—Was it that of propinquity? And did I share the blood, perhaps the features, of this singular being?—Strange as it may seem, a thrill of awe, which shot across my mind at that instant, was not unmingled with a wild and mysterious feeling of wonder, almost amounting to pleasure. I remembered the reflection of my own face in the mirror, at one striking moment during the singular interview of the day, and I hastened to the outward apartment to consult a glass which hung there, whether it were possible for my countenance to be again contorted into the peculiar frown which so much resembled the terrific look of Herries. But I folded my brows in vain into a thousand complicated wrinkles, and I was obliged to conclude, either that the supposed mark on my brow was altogether imaginary, or that it could not be called forth by voluntary effort.

a fine, what seemed most likely, that it was such a resemblance to the imagination traces in the embers of a wood fire, or among the red veins of marble, distinct at one time, and obscure or invisible to the other, according as the combination of lines strikes the eye, or suggests the fancy.

While I was moulding my visage like a mad player, the door suddenly opened, and the girl of the house entered. Angry and alarmed at being detected in my singular occupation, I turned round sharply, and, I suppose, chance produced the change on my features which I had been in vain labouring to call forth.

The girl started back, with her, "Don't ye look so now—don't ye, for love's sake—you be as like the ould Squoire—But here a comes," she said, huddling away out of the room; "and if you want a third, there is none but ould Harry, as I know of, that can match ye for a tight broo!"

As the girl muttered this exclamation, and hastened out of the room, Herries entered. He stopped on observing that I had looked on to the mirror, anxious to trace the look by which the wench undoubtedly been terrified. He seemed to guess what was passing on my mind, for, as I turned towards him, he observed, "Doubtless that it is stamped on your forehead—the fatal mark of our race; though it is not now so apparent as it will become when age and sorrow, and the traces of stormy passions, and of bitter penitence, have drawn their furrows on your brow."

"Mysterious man," I replied, "I know not of what you speak; your language is as dark as your purposes."

"Sit down, then," he said, "and listen; thus far, at least, must the veil of which you complain be raised. When withdrawn, it will display guilt and sorrow—guilt followed by strange penalty, and sorrow, which Providence has entailed upon the posterity of the sinners."

He paused a moment, and commenced his narrative, which he told with the air of one who, remote as the events were which he recited, still the deepest interest in them. The tone of his voice, which we already described as rich and powerful, aided by its inflections and effects of his story, which I will endeavour to write down, as fully as possible, in the very words which he used.

It was not of late years that the English learned, that their best chance of conquering their independent neighbours must be by inducing amongst them division and civil war. You need not be reminded of the state of thralldom to which Scotland was reduced by unhappy wars betwixt the domestic factions of Bruce and Baliol; how, after Scotland had been emancipated from a foreign yoke, the conduct and valour of the immortal Bruce, the whole fruits of the triumphs of Bannockburn were lost in the dreadful defeats of Philip and Halidon; and Edward Baliol, the minion and feudatory of his namesake of England, seemed, for a brief season, in safe and uncontested possession of the throne so lately occupied by the great-general and wisest prince in Europe. But the experience of Bruce had not died with him. There were many who had shared his martial labours, and all remembered the successful efforts by

which, under circumstances as disadvantageous as those of his he had achieved the liberation of Scotland.

"The usurper, Edward Baliol, was feasting with a few of favourite retainers in the Castle of Annan, when he was suddenly surprised by a chosen band of insurgent patriots. Their chiefs were, Douglas, Randolph, the young Earl of Moray, and Sir Sir Fraser; and their success was so complete, that Baliol was obliged to fly for his life scarcely clothed, and on a horse which there was no leisure to saddle. It was of importance to seize his person if possible, and his flight was closely pursued by a valiant knight of Norman descent, whose family had been long settled in the marches of Dumfriesshire. Their Norman appellation was Fitz-Aldin, and this knight, from the great slaughter which he had made of the Southrons, and the reluctance which he had shown to admit them into his quarter during the former war of that bloody period, had acquired the name of Redgauntlet, which he transmitted to his posterity—

"Redgauntlet!" I involuntarily repeated.

"Yes, Redgauntlet," said my alleged guardian, looking at me keenly; "does that name recall any associations to your mind?"

"No," I replied, "except that I had lately heard it given to the hero of a supernatural legend."

"There are many such legends concerning the family," answered; and then proceeded in his narrative.

"Alberick Redgauntlet, the first of his house so termed, was a man who may be supposed from his name, of a stern and implacable disposition, which had been rendered more so by family discord. An only son, now a youth of eighteen, shared so much the haughty spirit of his father, that he became impatient of domestic control, resisted paternal authority, and finally fled from his father's house, renouncing his political opinions, and awakened his mortal displeasure by joining the adherents of Baliol. It was said that his father cursed his wrath, his degenerate offspring, and swore that if they met he should perish by his hand. Meantime circumstances seemed to promise atonement for this great deprivation. The lady of Alberick Redgauntlet was again, after many years, in a situation which afforded her husband the hope of a more dutiful heir.

"But the delicacy and deep interest of his wife's condition did not prevent Alberick from engaging in the undertaking of Douglas and Moray. He had been the most forward in the attack of the castle, and was now foremost in the pursuit of Baliol, eagerly engaged in dispersing or cutting down the few daring followers who endeavoured to protect the usurper in his flight.

"As these were successively routed or slain, the formidable Redgauntlet, the mortal enemy of the House of Baliol, was within a few paces' length of the fugitive Edward Baliol, in a narrow pass, when a youth, one of the last who attended the usurper in his flight, thrust himself between them, received the shock of the pursuer, and was unhorsed and overthrown. The helmet rolled from his head, and the beams of the sun, then rising over the Solway, showed Redgauntlet the features of his disobedient son, in the livery, and wearing the cognisance, of the usurper.

Redgauntlet beheld his son lying before his horse's feet ; but he saw Baliol, the usurper of the Scottish crown, still, as it seemed, in his grasp, and separated from him only by the prostrate body of his overthrown adherent. Without pausing to inquire whether Edward was wounded, he dashed his spurs into his horse, aiming to leap over him, but was unhappily frustrated in his purpose. The steed made indeed a bound forward, but was unable to clear the body of the youth, and with its hind foot struck him in the forehead, as he was in the act of rising. The blow was mortal. It is needless to add, that the pursuit was checked, and Baliol captured.

Redgauntlet, ferocious as he is described, was yet overwhelmed by the thoughts of the crime he had committed. When he returned to his castle, it was to encounter new domestic sorrows. His wife had been prematurely seized with the pangs of labour, upon arriving at the dreadful catastrophe which had taken place. The birth of an infant boy cost her her life. Redgauntlet sat by her corpse for more than twenty-four hours, without changing either feature or countenance, so far as his terrified domestics could observe. The Abbot of Dundrennan preached consolation to him in vain. Douglas, who came to visit in his affliction a patriot of such distinguished zeal, was more successful in rousing his attention. He caused the trumpets to sound an English point of war in the courtyard, and Redgauntlet once sprung to his arms, and seemed restored to the recollection, which had been lost in the extent of his misery.

From that moment, whatever he might feel inwardly, he gave vent to no outward emotion. Douglas caused his infant to be brought ; but even the iron-hearted soldiers were struck with horror to observe, that, by the mysterious law of nature, the cause of his father's death, and the evidence of his father's guilt, was stamped on the innocent face of the babe, whose brow was distinctly marked with the miniature resemblance of a horseshoe. Redgauntlet himself pointed it out to Douglas, saying, with a ghastly smile, 'It should have been bloody.'

Moved, as he was, to compassion for his brother-in-arms, and checked against all softer feelings by the habits of civil war, Douglas shuddered at this sight, and displayed a desire to leave the house which was doomed to be the scene of such horrors. As his parting advice, he exhorted Alberick Redgauntlet to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Ninian's of Whiteherne, then esteemed a shrine of great sanctity ; and departed with a precipitation, which might have aggravated, had that been possible, the forlorn state of his unhappy friend. But that seems to have been incapable of admitting any consolation. Sir Alberick caused the bodies of his slaughtered son and mother to be laid side by side in the ancient chapel of his house, where he had used the skill of a celebrated surgeon of that time to embalm them ; and it was said, that for many weeks he spent some hours nightly in the vault where they reposed.

At length he undertook the proposed pilgrimage to Whiteherne, where he confessed himself for the first time since his misfortune, and was shrived by an aged monk, who afterwards died in the odour

of sanctity. It is said, that it was then foretold to the Redgaunt that on account of his unshaken patriotism, his family should continue to be powerful amid the changes of future times; but that, in detestation of his unrelenting cruelty to his own issue, Heaven had decreed that the valour of his race should always be fruitless, and that the cause which they espoused should never prosper.

"Submitting to such penance as was there imposed, Sir Alberic went, it is thought, on a pilgrimage either to Rome, or to the Holy Sepulchre itself. He was universally considered as dead; and was not till thirteen years afterwards that, in the great battle of Durham, fought between David Bruce and Queen Philippa of England, a knight, bearing a horseshoe for his crest, appeared in the van of the Scottish army, distinguishing himself by his reckless and desperate valour; who being at length overpowered and slain, was finally discovered to be the brave and unhappy Sir Alberic Redgauntlet."

"And has the fatal sign," said I, when Herries had ended his narrative, "descended on all the posterity of this unhappy house?"

"It has been so handed down from antiquity, and is still believed," said Herries. "But perhaps there is, in the popular evidence, something of that fancy which creates what it sees. Certainly, as other families have peculiarities by which they are distinguished, this Redgauntlet is marked in most individuals by a singular indentation of the forehead, supposed to be derived from the son of Alberic, their ancestor, and brother to the unfortunate Edward, who he perished in so piteous a manner. It is certain there seems to have been a fate upon the House of Redgauntlet, which has been on the losing side in almost all the civil broils which have divided the kingdom of Scotland from David Bruce's days, till the late valiant and unsuccessful attempt of the Chevalier Charles Edward."

He concluded with a deep sigh, as one whom the subject had involved in a train of painful reflections.

"And am I then," I exclaimed, "descended from this unhappy race?—Do you belong to it?—And if so, why do I sustain restraint and hard usage at the hands of a relation?"

"Inquire no farther for the present," he said. "The line of conduct which I am pursuing towards you, is dictated not by choice, but by necessity. You were withdrawn from the bosom of your family and the care of your legal guardian, by the timidity and ignorance of a doting mother, who was incapable of estimating the arguments or feelings of those who prefer honour and principle to fortune, and even to life. The young hawk, accustomed only to the fostering care of its dam, must be tamed by darkness and sleeplessness, ere it is trusted on the wing for the purposes of the falconer."

I was appalled at this declaration, which seemed to threaten a long continuance, and a dangerous termination, of my captivity. I deemed it best, however, to show some spirit, and at the same time to mingle a tone of conciliation. "Mr Herries," I said, "(if I call you rightly by that name), let us speak upon this matter without the tone of mystery and fear in which you seem inclined to envelope it. I have been long, alas! deprived of the care of that affectionate mother

you allude—long under the charge of strangers—and com-
d to form my own resolutions upon the reasoning of my own
L. Misfortune—early deprivation—has given me the privilege
ting for myself; and constraint shall not deprive me of an
ishman's best privilege."

The true cant of the day," said Herries, in a tone of scorn.
e privilege of free action belongs to no mortal—we are tied
n by the fetters of duty—our mortal path is limited by the regu-
ns of honour—our most indifferent actions are but meshes of
web of destiny by which we are all surrounded."

e paced the room rapidly, and proceeded in a tone of enthusiasm
h, joined to some other parts of his conduct, seems to intimate
ver-excited imagination, were it not contradicted by the general
r of his speech and conduct.

Nothing," he said, in an earnest yet melancholy voice—"nothing
e work of chance—nothing is the consequence of free-will—the
ty of which the Englishman boasts gives as little real freedom
s owner, as the despotism of an Eastern Sultan permits to his
. The usurper, William of Nassau, went forth to hunt, and
ght, doubtless, that it was by an act of his own royal pleasure
the horse of his murdered victim was prepared for his kingly
t. But Heaven had other views; and before the sun was high,
mble of that very animal over an obstacle so inconsiderable as
le-hillock, cost the haughty rider his life and his usurped crown.
You think an inclination of the rein could have avoided that triffl-
impediment? I tell you, it crossed his way as inevitably as all
ong chain of Caucasus could have done. Yes, young man, in
g and suffering, we play but the part allotted by Destiny, the
ager of this strange drama, stand bound to act no more than is
cribed, to say no more than is set down for us; and yet we
th about free-will, and freedom of thought and action, as if
ard must not die, or Richmond conquer, exactly where the
or has decreed it shall be so!"

e continued to pace the room after this speech, with folded arms
downcast looks; and the sound of his steps and tone of his voice
ght to my remembrance, that I had heard this singular person,
h I met him on a former occasion, uttering such soliloquies in
olitary chamber. I observed that, like other Jacobites, in his
eracy against the memory of King William, he had adopted the
opinion, that the monarch, on the day he had his fatal accident,
upon a horse once the property of the unfortunate Sir John
nd, executed for High Treason in 1696.

was not my business to aggravate, but, if possible, rather to
e him in whose power I was so singularly placed. When I
eived that the keenness of his feelings had in some degree
ded, I answered him as follows:—"I will not—indeed I feel
lf incompetent to argue a question of such metaphysical subtlety
at which involves the limits betwixt free-will and predestination.
is hope we may live honestly and die hopefully, without being
ed to form a decided opinion upon a point so far beyond our
rehension."

"Wisely resolved," he interrupted, with a sneer—"there came note from some Geneva sermon."

"But," I proceeded, "I call your attention to the fact, that I, well as you, am acted upon by impulses, the result either of my own free-will or the consequences of the part which is assigned to me by destiny. These may be—nay, at present they are—in direct contradiction to those by which you are actuated; and how shall we decide which shall have precedence?—*You* perhaps feel yourself destined to act as my jailor. I feel myself, on the contrary, destined to attempt and effect my escape. One of us must be wrong, but who can say which errs till the event has decided betwixt us?"

"I shall feel myself destined to have recourse to severe modes of restraint," said he, in the same tone of half jest, half earnest, which he had used.

"In that case," I answered, "it will be my destiny to attempt everything for my freedom."

"And it may be mine, young man," he replied, in a deep and steady tone, "to take care that you should rather die than attain your purpose."

This was speaking out indeed, and I did not allow him to go unanswerd. "You threaten me in vain," said I; "the laws of my country will protect me; or whom they cannot protect, they will avenge."

I spoke this firmly, and he seemed for a moment silenced; and the scorn with which he at last answered me, had something of affectation in it.

"The laws!" he said; "and what, stripling, do you know of the laws of your country?—Could you learn jurisprudence under a bar-born blotter of parchment, such as Saunders Fairford; or from the empty pedantic coxcomb, his son, who now, forsooth, writes himself advocate?—When Scotland was herself, and had her own King and Legislature, such plebeian cubs, instead of being called to the bar of her Supreme Courts, would scarce have been admitted to the honour of bearing a sheepskin process-bag."

Alan, I could not bear this, but answered indignantly, that he knew not the worth and honour from which he was detracting.

"I know as much of these Fairfords as I do of you," he replied.

"As much," said I, "and as little; for you can neither estimate their real worth nor mine. I know you saw them when last in Edinburgh."

"Ha!" he exclaimed, and turned on me an inquisitive look.

"It is true," said I; "you cannot deny it; and having thus shown you that I know something of your motions, let me warn you. I have modes of communication with which you are not acquainted. Oblige me not to use them to your prejudice."

"Prejudice *me*!" he replied. "Young man, I smile at, and forgive your folly. Nay, I will tell you that of which you are not aware, namely, that it was from letters received from these Fairfords that I first suspected, what the result of my visit to them confirmed, that you were the person whom I had sought for years."

"If you learned this," said I, "from the papers which were ab-

person on the night when I was under the necessity of becoming a guest at Brokenburn, I do not envy your indifference to the means of acquiring information. It was dishonourable to——”

Peace, young man,” said Herries, more calmly than I might have expected; “the word dishonour must not be mentioned as in conjunction with my name. Your pocketbook was in the pocket of your coat, and did not escape the curiosity of another, though it should have been sacred from mine. My servant, Cristal Nixon, brought me the intelligence after you were gone. I was displeased at the manner in which he had acquired his information; but it was not the less my duty to ascertain its truth, and for that purpose I went to Edinburgh. I was in hopes to persuade Mr Fairford to conform to my views; but I found him too much prejudiced to permit me to trust him. He is a wretched, yet a timid slave of the present government, under which our unhappy country is dishonourably enthralled; and it would have been altogether unfit and unsafe to have intrusted him with the secret either of the right which I possess to direct your actions, or of the manner in which I purpose to exercise it.”

I was determined to take advantage of his communicative humour, to obtain, if possible, more light upon his purpose. He seemed not accessible to being piqued on the point of honour, and I resolved to avail myself, but with caution, of his sensibility upon that point. “You say,” I replied, “that you are not friendly to indirect means, and disapprove of the means by which your domestic information of my name and quality—Is it honourable to avail yourself of that knowledge which is dishonourably obtained?”

“It is boldly asked,” he replied; “but, within certain necessary limits, I dislike not boldness of expostulation. You have, in this short interview, displayed more character and energy than I was prepared to expect. You will, I trust, resemble a forest plant, which, indeed, by some accident, been brought up in the greenhouse, and thus rendered delicate and effeminate, but which regains its natural firmness and tenacity, when exposed for a season to the open air. I will answer your question plainly. In business, as in war, spies and informers are necessary evils, which all good men must use, though they must yet all prudent men must use, unless they mean to fight and act blindfold. But nothing can justify the use of guile and treachery in our own person.”

“You said to the elder Mr Fairford,” continued I, with the same earnestness, which I began to find was my best game, “that I was the son of Ralph Latimer of Langcote-Hall?—How do you reconcile this with your late assertion that my name is not Latimer?”

“Coloured as he replied, “The doting old fool lied; or perhaps I took my meaning. I said, that gentleman *might* be your father. In truth, I wished you to visit England, your native country; and, when you might do so, my rights over you would revive.” His speech fully led me to understand a caution which had been impressed upon me, that, if I regarded my safety, I should not go to the southern Border; and I cursed my own folly, which kept uttering like a moth around the candle, until I was betrayed

into the calamity with which I had dallied. "What are those rights," I said, "which you claim over me?—To what end do you propose to turn them?"

"To a weighty one, you may be certain," answered Mr Herries; "but I do not, at present, mean to communicate to you either its nature or extent. You may judge of its importance, when, in order entirely to possess myself of your person, I condescended to mix myself with the fellows who destroyed the fishing station of your wretched Quaker. That I held him in contempt, and was displeased at the greedy devices with which he ruined a manly sport, is true enough; but, unless as it favoured my designs on you, he might have, for me, maintained his stake-nets till Solway should cease to ebb and flow."

"Alas!" I said, "it doubles my regret to have been the unwilling cause of misfortune to an honest and friendly man."

"Do not grieve for that," said Herries; "honest Joshua is one of those who, by dint of long prayers, can possess themselves of widow houses—he will quickly repair his losses. When he sustains an mishap, he and the other canters set it down as a debt against Heaven, and by way of set-off, practise rogueries without compunction, till they make the balance even, or incline it to the winning side. Enough of this for the present.—I must immediately shift my quarters; for, although I do not fear the over-zeal of Mr Justice Foxley or his clerk will lead them to any extreme measure, yet the mad scoundrel's unhappy recognition of me may make it more serious for them to connive at me, and I must not put their patience to an over severe trial. You must prepare to attend me, either as captive or a companion; if as the latter, you must give your parole of honour to attempt no escape. Should you be so ill-advised as break your word once pledged, be assured that I will blow your brains out, without a moment's scruple."

"I am ignorant of your plans and purposes," I replied, "and cannot but hold them dangerous. I do not mean to aggravate my present situation by any unavailing resistance to the superior force which detains me; but I will not renounce the right of asserting my natural freedom should a favourable opportunity occur. I will therefore, rather be your prisoner than your confederate."

"That is spoken fairly," he said; "and yet not without the caution of one brought up in the Gude Town of Edinburgh. On my part, I will impose no unnecessary hardship upon you; but, the contrary, your journey shall be made as easy as is consistent with your being kept safely. Do you feel strong enough to ride on horseback as yet, or would you prefer a carriage? The former mode of travelling is best adapted to the country through which we are to travel, but you are at liberty to choose between them."

I said, "I felt my strength gradually returning, and that I should much prefer travelling on horseback. A carriage," I added, "is close——"

"And so easily guarded," replied Herries, with a look as if he would have penetrated my very thoughts,—"that, doubtless, I think horseback better calculated for an escape."

"My thoughts are my own," I answered; "and though you keep your person prisoner, these are beyond your control."

"Oh, I can read the book, he said, "without opening the leaves. I would recommend to you to make no rash attempt, and it will be my care to see that you have no power to make any that is likely to be effectual. Linen, and all other necessities for one in your circumstances, are amply provided. Cristal Nixon will act as your valet,—I should rather perhaps say, your *femme de chambre*. Your travelling dress you may perhaps consider as singular, but it is such as the circumstances require; and, if you object to use the articles prepared for your use, your mode of journeying will be as personally pleasant as that which conducted you hither.—Adieu—We now know each other better than we did—it will not be my fault if the consequences of farther intimacy be not a more favourable mutual union.

He then left me with a civil good night, to my own reflections, and only turned back to say, that we should proceed on our journey, at daybreak next morning, at farthest; perhaps earlier, he said; but he complimented me by supposing that, as I was a sportsman, I must always be ready for a sudden start.

We are then at issue, this singular man and myself. His personal views are to a certain point explained. He has chosen an antiquated and desperate line of politics, and he claims, from some pretended principle of guardianship, or relationship, which he does not deign to explain, but which he seems to have been able to pass current on a country Justice and his knavish clerk, a right to direct and to control my motions. The danger which awaited me in England, and which I might have escaped had I remained in Scotland, was doubtless occasioned by the authority of this man. But what my poor mother might fear for me as a child—what my English friend, Daniel Griffiths, endeavoured to guard against during my youth and age, is now, it seems, come upon me; and, under a legal pretext, I am detained in what must be a most illegal manner, by a person, too, whose own political immunities have been forfeited by his conduct. It matters not—my mind is made up—neither persuasion nor threats will force me into the desperate designs which this man meditates. Whether I am of the trifling consequence which my life hitherto seems to intimate, or whether I have (as would appear from my adversary's conduct) such importance, by birth or fortune, as may make me a desirable acquisition to a political faction, my resolution is unshaken in either case. Those who read this Journal, if it shall be viewed by impartial eyes, shall judge of me truly; and if they consider me as a fool in encountering danger unnecessarily, they shall have no reason to believe me a coward or a turncoat, when I find myself engaged in it. I have been bred in sentiments of attachment to the family on the throne, and in these sentiments I will live and die. I have, indeed, some idea that Mr Herries has already discovered that I am made of different and more unmalleable metal than was at first believed. There were letters from my dear Alan Herries, giving a ludicrous account of my instability of temper, in the same pocketbook which, according to the admission of my pre-

tended guardian, fell under the investigation of his domestic, during the night I passed at Brokenburn, where, as I now recollect, my wet clothes, with the contents of my pockets, were, with the thoughtlessness of a young traveller, committed too rashly to the care of a strange servant. And my kind friend and hospitable landlord, Mr Alexander Fairford, may also, and with justice, have spoken of my levities to this man. But he shall find he has made a false estimate upon these plausible grounds, since——

I must break off for the present.

CHAPTER X.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THERE is at length a halt—at length I have gained so much privacy as to enable me to continue my Journal. It has become a sort of task of duty to me, without the discharge of which I do not feel that the business of the day is performed. True, no friendly eye may ever look upon these labours, which have amused the solitary hours of an unhappy prisoner. Yet, in the meanwhile, the exercise of the pen seems to act as a sedative upon my own agitated thoughts and tumultuous passions. I never lay it down but I rise stronger in resolution, more ardent in hope. A thousand vague fears, wild expectations, and indigested schemes, hurry through one's thoughts in seasons of doubt and of danger. But by arresting them as they flit across the mind, by throwing them on paper, and even by that mechanical act compelling ourselves to consider them with scrupulous and minute attention, we may perhaps escape becoming the dupes of our own excited imagination; just as a young horse is cured of the vice of starting, by being made to stand still and look for some time without any interruption at the cause of its terror.

There remains but one risk, which is that of discovery. But besides the small characters, in which my residence in Mr Fairford's house enabled me to excel, for the purpose of transferring as many scroll sheets as possible to a huge sheet of stamped paper, I have, as I have elsewhere intimated, had hitherto the comfortable reflection that if the record of my misfortunes should fall into the hands of him by whom they are caused, they would, without harming any one show him the real character and disposition of the person who has become his prisoner—perhaps his victim. Now, however, that other names, and other characters, are to be mingled with the register of my own sentiments, I must take additional care of these papers, and keep them in such a manner that, in case of the least hazard of detection, I may be able to destroy them at a moment's notice. I shall not soon or easily forget the lesson I have been taught, by the prying disposition which Cristal Nixon, this man's agent and confederate, manifested at Brokenburn, and which proved the original cause of my sufferings.

y laying aside the last sheet of my Journal hastily was occasioned by the unwonted sound of a violin in the farm-yard beneath the windows. It will not appear surprising to those who have made it their study, that, after listening to a few notes, I became at once assured that the musician was no other than the itinerant, formerly mentioned as present at the destruction of Joshua Geddes's e-nets, the superior delicacy and force of whose execution would lead me to swear to his bow amongst a whole orchestra. I had no less reason to doubt his identity, because he played twice over the beautiful Scottish air called Wandering Willie; and I could not conclude that he did so for the purpose of intimating his own presence, since what the French called the *nom de guerre* of the performer was described by the tune.

Hope will catch at the most feeble twig for support in extremity. I knew this man, though deprived of sight, to be bold, ingenious, perfectly capable of acting as a guide. I believed I had won good-will, by having, in a frolic, assumed the character of his helper; and I remembered that, in a wild, wandering, and disorderly course of life, men, as they become loosened from the ordinary bonds of civil society, hold those of comradeship more closely; so that honour is sometimes found among thieves, and faithful attachment in such as the law has termed vagrants. The history of Richard Cœur de Lion and his minstrel, Blondel, rushed, at the same time, on my mind, though I could not even then suppress a doubt at the dignity of the example, when applied to a blind fiddler myself. Still there was something in all this to awaken a hope, if I could open a correspondence with this poor violer, he might be useful in extricating me from my present situation.

My profession furnished me with some hope that this desired communication might be attained; since it is well known that, in Scotland, where there is so much national music, the words and airs of which are generally known, there is a kind of free-masonry amongst farmers, by which they can, by the mere choice of a tune, express great deal to the hearers. Personal allusions are often made in this manner with much point and pleasantry; and nothing is more usual at public festivals, than that the air played to accompany a peculiar health or toast, is made the vehicle of compliment, of wit, sometimes of satire.¹

While these things passed through my mind rapidly, I heard my name and beneath recommence, for the third time, the air from which my own name had been probably adopted, when he was interrupted by his rustic auditors.

"If thou canst play no other spring but that, mon, ho hadst best up ho's pipes and be jogging. Squoire will be back anon, or for Nixon, and we'll see who will pay poiper then." "Ho, thought I, if I had no sharper ears than those of my friends and Dorcas to encounter, I may venture an experiment upon

¹ Every one must remember instances of this festive custom, in which the adaptation of the tune to the toast was remarkably felicitous. Old Neil Gow, and his son Niel, were peculiarly happy on such occasions,

them ; and, as most expressive of my state of captivity, I sung two or three lines of the 137th Psalm—

By Babel's streams we sat and wept."

The country people listened with attention, and when I ceased heard them whisper together in tones of commiseration, "Lackaday, poor soul! so pretty a man to be beside his wits!"

"An he be that gate," said Wandering Willie, in a tone calculated to reach my ears, "I ken naething will raise his spirits like a spring. And he struck up, with great vigour and spirit, the lively Scottish air, the words of which instantly occurred to me,—

"Oh whistle and I'll come t' ye, my lad,
Oh whistle and I'll come t' ye, my lad;
Though father and mother and a' should gae mad,
Oh whistle and I'll come t' ye, my lad."

I soon heard a clattering noise of feet in the courtyard, which concluded to be Jan and Dorcas dancing a jig in their Cumberland wooden clogs. Under cover of this din, I endeavoured to answer Willie's signal by whistling, as loud as I could,

"Come back again and loe me
When a' the lave are gane."

He instantly threw the dancers out, by changing his air to

"There's my thumb, I'll ne'er beguile thee."

I no longer doubted that a communication betwixt us was happily established, and that, if I had an opportunity of speaking to the poor musician, I should find him willing to take my letter to the post, to invoke the assistance of some active magistrate, or of the commanding-officer of Carlisle Castle, or, in short, to do whatever else I could point out, in the compass of his power, to contribute to my liberation. But to obtain speech of him I must have run the risk of alarming the suspicions of Dorcas, if not of her yet more stupid Corydon. My ally's blindness prevented his receiving any communication by signs from the window—even if I could have ventured to make them, consistently with prudence—so that, notwithstanding the mode of intercourse we had adopted was both circuitous and peculiarly liable to misapprehension, I saw nothing I could do better than continue it, trusting my own and my correspondent's acuteness, applying to the airs the meaning they were intended to convey. I thought of singing the words themselves of some significant song, but feared I might, by doing so, attract suspicion. I endeavoured therefore, to intimate my speedy departure from my present place of residence, by whistling the well-known air with which festive parties in Scotland usually conclude the dance—

"Good-night and joy be wi' ye a',
For here nae langer maun I stay;
There's neither friend nor foe of mine
But wishes that I were away."

It appeared that Willie's powers of intelligence were much more alive than mine, and that, like a deaf person, accustomed to be spoken to by signs, he comprehended, from the very first notes, the whole meaning I intended to convey; and he accompanied me in the melody with his violin, in such a manner as at once to show he understood my meaning, and to prevent my whistling from being then needed to.

His reply was almost immediate, and was conveyed in the old martial air of "Hey, Johnnie, lad, cock up your beaver." I ran over the words, and fixed on the following stanza, as most applicable to my circumstances:—

"Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush,
We'll over the Border and give them a brush,
There's somebody there we'll teach better behaviour—
Hey, Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver."

If these sounds alluded, as I hope they do, to the chance of assistance from my Scottish friends, I may indeed consider that a door is open to hope and freedom. I immediately replied with

"My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer and following the roe;
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

"Farewell to the Highlands! farewell to the North!
The birthplace of valour, the cradle of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love."

Willie instantly played, with a degree of spirit which might have awakened hope in Despair herself, if Despair could be supposed to understand Scotch Music, the fine old Jacobite air,

"For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as much as a' that."

I next endeavoured to intimate my wish to send notice of my addition to my friends; and, despairing to find an air sufficiently expressive of my purpose, I ventured to sing a verse, which, in various forms, occurs so frequently in old ballads—

"Where will I get a bonny boy
That will win hose and shoon;
That will gae down to Durisdeer,
And bid my merry men come?"

He drowned the latter part of the verse by playing, with much phasis,

"Kind Robin loes me."

Of this, though I ran over the verses of the song in my mind, I could make nothing; and before I could contrive any mode of intimating my uncertainty, a cry arose in the courtyard that Cristal was coming. My faithful Willie was obliged to retreat; but before he had half played, half hummed, by way of farewell,

“Leave thee—leave thee, lad—
 I’ll never leave thee;
 The stars shall gae withershins
 Ere I will leave thee.”

I am thus, I think, secure of one trusty adherent in my misfortunes; and, however whimsical it may be to rely much on a man of his idle profession, and deprived of sight withal, it is deeply impressed on my mind that his services may be both useful and necessary. There is another quarter from which I look for succour, and which I have indicated to thee, Alan, in more than one passage of my Journal. Twice, at the early hour of daybreak, I have seen the individual alluded to in the court of the farm, and twice she made signs of recognition in answer to the gestures by which I endeavoured to make her comprehend my situation; but on both occasions she pressed her finger on her lips, as expressive of silence and secrecy.

The manner in which G. M. entered upon the scene for the first time, seems to assure me of her goodwill, so far as her power may reach; and I have many reasons to believe it is considerable. Yet she seemed hurried and frightened during the very transitory moments of our interview, and I think was, upon the last occasion, startled by the entrance of some one into the farmyard just as she was on the point of addressing me. You must not ask whether I am an early riser, since such objects are only to be seen at daybreak; and although I have never again seen her, yet I have reason to think she is not distant. It was but three nights ago, that, worn out by the uniformity of my confinement, I had manifested more symptoms of despondence than I had before exhibited, which I conceive may have attracted the attention of the domestics, through whom the circumstance might transpire. On the next morning, the following lines lay on my table; but how conveyed there, I cannot tell. The hand in which they were written is a beautiful Italian manuscript:—

“As lords their labourers’ hire delay,
 Fate quits our toil with hopes to come,
 Which, if far short of present pay,
 Still owns a debt and names a sum.

“Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer, then,
 Although a distant date be given;
 Despair is treason towards man,
 And blasphemy to Heaven.”

That these lines were written with the friendly purpose of inducing me to keep up my spirits, I cannot doubt; and I trust the manner in which I shall conduct myself may show that the pledge is accepted.

The dress is arrived in which it seems to be my self-elected guardian’s pleasure that I shall travel; and what does it prove to be?—A skirt, or upper petticoat of camlet, like those worn by country ladies of moderate rank when on horseback, with such a riding-mask as they frequently use on journeys to preserve their eyes and complexion from the sun and dust; and sometimes, it is suspected, to enable them to play off a little coquetry. From the gayer mode of employing the mask, however, I suspect I shall be precluded; for instead of being

y pasteboard, covered with black velvet, I observe with anxiety
t mine is thickened with a plate of steel, which, like Quixote's
or, serves to render it more strong and durable.
This apparatus, together with a steel clasp for securing the mask
ind me with a padlock, gave me fearful recollections of the un-
unate being who, never being permitted to lay aside such a visor,
quired the well-known historical epithet of the Man in the Iron
sk. I hesitated a moment whether I should so far submit to the
s of oppression designed against me as to assume this disguise,
ch was, of course, contrived to aid their purposes. But then I
remembered Mr Herries's threat, that I should be kept close prisoner
carriage, unless I assumed the dress which should be appointed
me; and I considered the comparative degree of freedom which
ight purchase by wearing the mask and female dress as easily
advantageously purchased. Here, therefore, I must pause for
present, and await what the morning may bring forth.

To carry on the story from the documents before us, we think it
per here to drop the Journal of the captive Darsie Latimer, and
pt, instead, a narrative of the proceedings of Alan Fairford in
suit of his friend, which forms another series in this history.]

CHAPTER XI.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD.

HE reader ought by this time to have formed some idea of the
racter of Alan Fairford. He had a warmth of heart which the
ly of the law and of the world could not chill, and talents which
y had rendered unusually acute. Deprived of the personal pat-
age enjoyed by most of his contemporaries, who assumed the
n under the protection of their aristocratic alliances and descents,
early saw that he should have that to achieve for himself which
to them as a right of birth. He laboured hard in silence and
tude, and his labours were crowned with success. But Alan
ed on his friend Darsie even more than he loved his profession,
, as we have seen, threw everything aside when he thought Lati-
in danger; forgetting fame and fortune, and hazarding even the
ous displeasure of his father, to rescue him whom he loved with
elder brother's affection. Darsie, though his parts were more
k and brilliant than those of his friend, seemed always to the lat-
t being under his peculiar charge, whom he was called upon to
ish and protect, in cases where the youth's own experience was
qual to the exigency; and now, when, the fate of Latimer seem-
worse than doubtful, Alan's whole prudence and energy were to
xerted in his behalf, an adventure which might have seemed

perilous to most youths of his age, had no terrors for him. He was well acquainted with the laws of his country, and knew how to appeal to them; and, besides his professional confidence, his natural disposition was steady, sedate, persevering, and undaunted. With these requisites he undertook a quest which, at that time, was not unattended with actual danger, and had much in it to appal a more timid disposition.

Fairford's first inquiry concerning his friend was of the chief magistrate of Dumfries, Provost Crosbie, who had sent the information of Darsie's disappearance. On his first application, he thought he discerned in the honest dignitary a desire to get rid of the subject. The Provost spoke of the riot at the fishing station as an "outbreak among those lawless loons the fishermen, which concerned the Sheriff," he said, "more than us poor Town-Council bodies, that have enough to do to keep peace within burgh, among such a set of commoners as the town are plagued with."

"But this is not all, Provost Crosbie," said Mr Alan Fairford; "a young gentleman of rank and fortune has disappeared amongst their hands—you know him. My father gave him a letter to you—Mr Darsie Latimer."

"Lack-a-day, yes! lack-a-day, yes!" said the Provost; "Mr Darsie Latimer—he dined at my house—I hope he is well?"

"I hope so too," said Alan, rather indignantly; "but I desire more certainty on that point. You yourself wrote my father that he had disappeared."

"Troth, yes, and that is true," said the Provost. "But did he not go back to his friends in Scotland? it was not natural to think he would stay here."

"Not unless he is under restraint," said Fairford, surprised at the coolness with which the Provost seemed to take up the matter.

"Rely on it, sir," said Mr Crosbie, "that if he has not returned to his friends in Scotland, he must have gone to his friends in England."

"I will rely on no such thing," said Alan; "if there is law or justice in Scotland, I will have the thing cleared to the very bottom."

"Reasonable, reasonable," said the Provost, "so far as is possible but you know I have no power beyond the ports of the burgh."

"But you are in the commission besides, Mr Crosbie; a Justice of Peace for the County."

"True, very true—that is," said the cautious magistrate, "I will not say but my name may stand on the list, but I cannot remember that I have ever qualified."¹

"Why, in that case," said young Fairford, "there are ill-natured people might doubt your attachment to the Protestant line, Mr Crosbie."

"God forbid, Mr Fairford! I who have done and suffered in the forty-five! I reckon the Highlandmen did me damage to the amount of £100 Scots, forby all they ate and drank—no, no, sir, I stand beyond challenge; but as for plaguing myself with county business, let them that aught the mare shoe the mare. The Commissioners

¹ By taking the oaths to Government.

ply would see my back broken before they would help me in the gh's work, and all the world kens the difference of the weight veen public business in burgh and landward. What are their s to me? have we not riots enough of our own?—But I must be ing ready, for the Council meets this forenoon. I am blithe to your father's son on the causeway of our ancient burgh, Mr Alan rford. Were you a twelvemonth aulder, we would make a bur- s of you, man. I hope you will come and dine with me before go away. What think you of to-day at two o'clock—just a sted chucky and a drappit egg?"

Alan Fairford resolved that his friend's hospitality should not, as seemed the inviter intended, put a stop to his queries. "I must y you for a moment," he said, "Mr Crosbie; this is a serious ir; a young gentleman of high hopes, my own dearest friend is sing—you cannot think it will be passed over slightly, if a man of r high character and known zeal for the government do not ke some active inquiry. Mr Crosbie, you are my father's friend, I respect you as such—but to others it will have a bad appear- e."

The withers of the Provost were not unwrung; he paced the room much tribulation, repeating, "But what can I do, Mr Fairford? arrant your friend casts up again—he will come back again, like ill shilling—he is not the sort of gear that tynes—a hellicat boy, ning through the country with a blind fiddler, and playing the le to a parcel of blackguards, who can tell where the like of him y have scampered to?"

There are persons apprehended, and in the jail of the town, as I erstand from the Sheriff-Substitute," said Mr Fairford; "you st call them before you, and inquire what they know of this young tleman."

Ay, ay—the Sheriff-Depute did commit some poor creatures, I eve—wretched, ignorant fishermen bodies, that had been quarrel- g with Quaker Geddes and his stake-nets, whilk, under favour of r gown be it spoken, Mr Fairford, are not over and above lawful, t the Town-Clerk thinks that they may be lawfully removed *via ti*—but that is by the by. But, sir, the creatures were a' dis- sed for want of evidence; the Quaker would not swear to them, t what could the Sheriff and me do but just let them loose? Come a; cheer up, Master Alan, and take a walk till dinner-time—I must lly go to the Council."

Stop a moment, Provost," said Alan; "I lodge a complaint before a as a magistrate, and you will find it serious to slight it over. u must have these men apprehended again."

Ay, ay—easy said; but catch them that can," answered the Pro- t; "they are ower the March by this time, or by the point of rn.—Lord help ye! they are a kind of amphibious deevils, neither l nor water beasts—neither English nor Scots—neither county stewartry, as we say—they are dispersed like so much quicksilver. a may as well try to whistle a sealgh out of the Solway, as to get l of one of them till all the fray is over."

Mr Crosbie, this will not do," answered the young counsellor;

"there is a person of more importance than such wretches as you describe concerned in this unhappy business—I must name to you a certain Mr Herries."

He kept his eye on the Provost as he uttered the name, which he did rather at a venture, and from the connection which that gentleman, and his real or supposed niece, seemed to have with the fate of Darsie Latimer, than from any distinct cause of suspicion which he entertained. He thought the Provost seemed embarrassed, though he showed much desire to assume an appearance of indifference, in which he partly succeeded.

"Herries!" he said—"what Herries?—There are many of that name—not so many as formerly, for the old stocks are wearing out—but there is Herries of Heathgill, and Herries of Auchintulloch, and Herries——"

"To save you farther trouble, this person's designation is Herries of Birrenswork."

"Of Birrenswork?" said Mr Crosbie; "I have you now, Mr Alan. Could you not as well have said, the Laird of Redgauntlet?"

Fairford was too wary to testify any surprise at this identification of names, however unexpected. "I thought," said he, "he was more generally known by the name of Herries. I have seen and been in company with him under that name, I am sure."

"Oh ay; in Edinburgh, be like. You know Redgauntlet was unfortunately a great while ago, and though he was maybe not deeper in the mire than other folk, yet, for some reason or other, he did not get so easily out."

"He was attainted, I understand; and has no remission," said Fairford.

The cautious Provost only nodded, and said, "You may guess therefore, why it is so convenient he should hold his mother's name which is also partly his own, when he is about Edinburgh. To bear his proper name might be accounted a kind of flying in the face of government, ye understand. But he has been long connived at—the story is an old story—and the gentleman has many excellent qualities and is of a very ancient and honourable house—has cousins among the great folk—counts kin with the Advocate and with the Sheriff—hawks, you know, Mr Alan, will not pike out hawks' een—he is widely connected—*my* wife is a fourth cousin of Redgauntlet's."

Hinc illæ lachrymæ! thought Alan Fairford to himself; but the hint presently determined him to proceed by soft means and with caution. "I beg you to understand," said Fairford, "that in the investigation I am about to make, I design no harm to Mr Herries, or Redgauntlet—call him what you will. All I wish is, to ascertain the safety of my friend. I know that he was rather foolish in once going upon a mere frolic, in disguise, to the neighbourhood of this same gentleman's house. In his circumstances, Mr Redgauntlet may have misinterpreted the motives, and considered Darsie Latimer as a spy. His influence, I believe, is great, among the disorderly people you spoke of but now?"

The Provost answered with another sagacious shake of his head that would have done honour to Lord Burleigh in the Critic.

"Well, then," continued Fairford, "is it not possible that, in the staken belief that Mr Latimer was a spy, he may, upon such suspicion, have caused him to be carried off and confined somewhere?—such things are done at elections, and on occasions less pressing than when men think their lives are in danger from an informer."

"Mr Fairford," said the Provost, very earnestly, "I scarce think such a mistake possible: or if, by any extraordinary chance, it should have taken place, Redgauntlet, whom I cannot but know well, being, as I have said, my wife's first cousin (fourth cousin, I should say), is altogether incapable of doing anything harsh to the young gentleman. He might send him over to Ailsay for a night or two, or maybe send him on the north coast of Ireland, or in Islay, or some of the Hebrides, but depend upon it, he is incapable of harming a hair of his head."

"I am determined not to trust to that, Provost," answered Fairford, firmly; "and I am a good deal surprised at your way of talking so lightly of such an aggression on the liberty of the subject. You are to consider, and Mr Herries or Mr Redgauntlet's friends would do very well also to consider, how it will sound in the ears of an English Secretary of State, that an attainted traitor (for such is this gentleman) has not only ventured to take up his abode in this realm against the King of which he has been in arms—but is suspected of having proceeded, by open force and violence, against the person of one of the lieges, a young man, who is neither without friends nor property to secure his being righted."

The Provost looked at the young counsellor with a face in which trust, alarm, and vexation seemed mingled. "A fashious job," he said at last, "a fashious job; and it will be dangerous meddling with it. I should like ill to see your father's son turn informer against an unfortunate gentleman."

"Neither do I mean it," answered Alan, "provided that unfortunate gentleman and his friends give me a quiet opportunity of securing *my* friend's safety. If I could speak with Mr Redgauntlet, and hear his own explanation, I should probably be satisfied. If I am forced to denounce him to government, it will be in his new capacity as a kidnapper. I may not be able, nor is it my business, to prevent him being recognised in his former character of an attainted person, except from the general pardon."

"Master Fairford," said the Provost, "would ye ruin the poor innocent gentleman on an idle suspicion?"

"Say no more of it, Mr Crosbie; my line of conduct is determined unless that suspicion is removed."

"Weel, sir," said the Provost, "since so it be, and since you say that you do not seek to harm Redgauntlet personally, I'll ask a man to line with us to-day that kens as much about his matters as most. You must think, Mr Alan Fairford, though Redgauntlet be my wife's near relative, and though, doubtless, I wish him weel, yet he is not the person who is like to be intrusted with his incomings and outgoings. I am not a man for that—I keep the kirk, and I oppose Popery—I have stood up for the House of Hanover, and for liberty and property—I carried arms, sir, against the Pretender,

when three of the Highlandmen's baggage-carts were stopped at Ecclefechan; and I had an especial loss of a hundred pounds——"

"Scots," interrupted Fairford. "You forget you told me all this before."

"Scots or English, it was too much for me to lose," said the Provost; "so you see I am not a person to pack or peel with Jacobites and such unfreemen as poor Redgauntlet."

"Granted, granted, Mr Crosbie; and what then?" said Alan Fairford.

"Why, then, it follows, that if I am to help you at this pinch, I cannot be by and through my ain personal knowledge, but through some fitting agent or third person."

"Granted again," said Fairford. "And pray who may this third person be?"

"Wha but Pate Maxwell of Summertrees—him they call Pate-in-Peril."

"An old forty-five man, of course?" said Fairford.

"Ye may swear that," replied the Provost—"as black a Jacobite as the auld leaven can make him; but a sonsy, merry companion that none of us think it worth while to break wi' for all his brags and his clavers. You would have thought, if he had had but his own way at Derby, he would have marched Charlie Stewart through between Wade and the Duke, as a thread goes through the needle's ee, and seated him in Saint James's before you could have said haud your hand. But though he is a windy body when he gets on his auld-world stories, he has mair gumption in him than most people—knows business, Mr Alan, being bred to the law; but never took the gown, because of the oaths, which kept more folk out then than they do now—the more's the pity."

"What! are you sorry, Provost, that Jacobitism is upon the decline?" said Fairford.

"No, no," answered the Provost—"I am only sorry for folks losing the tenderness of conscience which they used to have. I have a son breeding to the bar, Mr Fairford; and, no doubt, considering my services and sufferings, I might have looked for some bit postie to him; but if the muckle tikes come in—I mean a' these Maxwells and Johnstones, and great lairds, that the oaths used to keep out lang syne—the bits o' messan dogies, like my son, and maybe like your father's son, Mr Alan, will be sair put to the wall."

"But to return to the subject, Mr Crosbie," said Fairford, "do you really think it likely that this Mr Maxwell will be of service in this matter?"

"It's very like he may be, for he is the tongue of the trump to the whole squad of them," said the Provost; "and Redgauntlet, though he will not stick at times to call him a fool, takes more of his counsel than any man's else that I am aware of. If Pate can bring him to a communing, the business is done. He's a sharp chield, Pate-in-Peril."

"Pate-in-Peril!" repeated Alan; "a very singular name."

"Ay, and it was in as queer a way he got it; but I'll say naething about that," said the Provost, "for fear of forestalling his market."

ye are sure to hear it once at least, however oftener, before the ch-bowl gives place to the tea-pot.—And now, fare ye weel; for ere is the council-bell clinking in earnest; and if I am not there ere it jows in, Bailie Laurie will be trying some of his manœuvres." The Provost, repeating his expectation of seeing Mr Fairford at o'clock, at length effected his escape from the young counsellor, left him at a considerable loss how to proceed. The Sheriff, it seems, had returned to Edinburgh, and he feared to find the visible unguance of the Provost to interfere with this Laird of Birrenskirk, or Redgauntlet, much stronger amongst the country gentlemen, many of whom were Catholics as well as Jacobites, and most of them unwilling to quarrel with kinsmen and friends, by prosecuting with severity political offences which had almost run a prescription. To collect all the information in his power, and not to have recourse to the higher authorities until he could give all the light of which the case was capable, seemed the wiser proceeding in a choice of difficulties. He had some conversation with the Procurator-general, who, as well as the Provost, was an old correspondent of his father. Alan expressed to that officer a purpose of visiting Wickenburg, but was assured by him that it would be a step attended with much danger to his own person, and altogether fruitless; that the individuals who had been ringleaders in the riot were long since safely sheltered in their various lurking-holes in the Isle of Man, Cumberland, and elsewhere; and that those who might remain would undoubtedly commit violence on any who visited their settlements with the purpose of inquiring into the late disturbances. There were not the same objections to his hastening to Mount Sharon, where he expected to find the latest news of his friend; and there was time enough to do so before the hour appointed for the Provost's dinner. Upon the road he congratulated himself on having obtained one point of almost certain information. The person who had in a manner forced himself upon his father's hospitality, and who appeared desirous to induce Darsie Latimer to visit England, against whom, too, a sort of warning had been received from an individual connected with and residing in his own family, proved to be the promoter of the disturbance in which Darsie had disappeared. What could be the cause of such an attempt on the liberty of an offensive and amiable man? It was impossible it could be merely owing to Redgauntlet's mistaking Darsie for a spy; for though that was the solution which Fairford had offered to the Provost, he well knew that, in point of fact, he himself had been warned by his singular visitor of some danger to which his friend was exposed, before such suspicion could have been entertained; and the injunctions received by Latimer from his guardian, or him who acted as such, Mr Griffiths of London, pointed to the same thing. He was rather glad, however, that he had not let Provost Crosbie into his secret, farther than was absolutely necessary; since it was plain that the connection of his wife with the suspected party was likely to affect his impartiality as a magistrate.

When Alan Fairford arrived at Mount Sharon, Rachel Geddes hastened to meet him, almost before the servant could open the door.

She drew back in disappointment when she beheld a stranger, and said, to excuse her precipitation, that "she had thought it was her brother Joshua returned from Cumberland."

"Mr Geddes is then absent from home?" said Fairford, much disappointed in his turn.

"He hath been gone since yesterday, friend," answered Rachel, once more composed to the quietude which characterises her sex, but her pale cheek and red eye giving contradiction to her assumed equanimity.

"I am," said Fairford, hastily, "the particular friend of a young man not unknown to you, Miss Geddes—the friend of Darsie Latimer—and am come hither in the utmost anxiety, having understood from Provost Crosbie that he had disappeared in the night when a destructive attack was made upon the fishing-station of Mr Geddes."

"Thou dost afflict me, friend, by thy inquiries," said Rachel, more affected than before; "for although the youth was, like those of the worldly generation, wise in his own conceit, and lightly to be moved by the breath of vanity, yet Joshua loved him, and his heart clave to him as if he had been his own son. And when he himself escaped from the sons of Belial, which was not until they had tired themselves with reviling, and with idle reproach, and the jests of the scoffer, Joshua, my brother, returned to them once and again, to give ransom for the youth called Darsie Latimer, with offers of money and with promise of remission, but they would not hearken to him. Also he went before the Head Judge, whom men call the Sheriff, and would have told him of the youth's peril; but he would in no way hearken to him unless he would swear unto the truth of his word, which thing he might not do without sin, seeing it is written, Swear not at all—also, that our conversation shall be yea or nay. Therefore Joshua returned to me disconsolate, and said, 'Sister Rachel, this youth hath run into peril for my sake; assuredly I shall not be guiltless if a hair of his head be harmed, seeing I have sinned in permitting him to go with me to the fishing-station when such evil was to be feared. Therefore, I will take my horse, even Solomon, and ride swiftly into Cumberland, and I will make myself friends with Mammon of Unrighteousness, among the magistrates of the Gentiles, and among their mighty men; and it shall come to pass that Darsie Latimer shall be delivered, even if it were at the expense of half my substance.' And I said, 'Nay, my brother, go not, for thou wilt but scoff at and revile thee; but hire with thy silver one of the scribes, who are eager as hunters in pursuing their prey, and he shall free Darsie Latimer from the men of violence by his cunning, and thy soul shall be guiltless of evil towards the lad.' But he answered and said, 'I will not be controlled in this matter.' And he is gone forth, and hath not returned, and I fear me that he may never return; for though he be peaceful, as becometh one who holds no violence as offence against his own soul, yet neither the floods of water, nor the fear of the snare, nor the drawn sword of the adversary brandished in the path, will overcome his purpose. Wherefore the Solway may swallow him up, or the sword of the enemy may d

him—nevertheless, my hope is better in Him who directeth all things, and ruleth over the waves of the sea, and overruleth the deeds of the wicked, and who can redeem us even as a bird from the fowler's net."

This was all that Fairford could learn from Miss Geddes; but he heard with pleasure that the good Quaker, her brother, had many friends among those of his own profession in Cumberland, and without exposing himself to so much danger as his sister seemed to apprehend, he trusted he might be able to discover some traces of Darsie Latimer. He himself rode back to Dumfries, having left with Miss Geddes his direction in that place, and an earnest request that she would forward thither whatever information she might obtain from her brother.

On Fairford's return to Dumfries, he employed the brief interval which remained before dinner-time, in writing an account of what had befallen Latimer, and of the present uncertainty of his condition, to Mr Samuel Griffiths, through whose hands the remittances for his friend's service had been regularly made, desiring he would instantly acquaint him with such parts of his history as might direct him in the search which he was about to institute through the border counties, in which he pledged himself not to give up until he had obtained news of his friend, alive or dead. The young lawyer's mind felt relieved when he had despatched this letter. He could not conceive any reason why his friend's life should be aimed at; he knew Darsie had done nothing by which his liberty could be legally affected; and although, even of late years, there had been singular histories of men, and women also, who had been trepanned, and concealed in solitudes and distant islands, in order to serve some temporary purpose, such ruses had been chiefly practised by the rich on the poor, and by the strong on the feeble; whereas, in the present case, this Mr Herbert, or Redgauntlet, being amenable, for more reasons than one, to the censure of the law, must be the weakest in any struggle in which could be appealed to. It is true, that his friendly anxiety whispered, that the very cause which rendered this oppressor less formidable, might make him more desperate. Still, recalling his language, so strikingly that of the gentleman, and even of the man of honour, Fairford concluded, that though, in his feudal pride, Redgauntlet might venture on the deeds of violence exercised by the aristocracy in other times, he could not be capable of any action of deliberate atrocity. And in these convictions he went to dine with the Provost Crosbie, with a heart more at ease than might have been expected.¹

¹ See Note Q. *Trepanned and Concealed.*

CHAPTER XII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

FIVE minutes had elapsed after the town-clock struck two, before Alan Fairford, who had made a small detour to put his letter into the post-house, reached the mansion of Mr Provost Crosbie, and was at once greeted by the voice of that civic dignitary, and the rural dignity his visitor, as by the voices of men impatient for their dinner.

"Come away, Mr Fairford—the Edinburgh time is later than ours," said the Provost.

And, "Come away, young gentleman," said the Laird; "I remember your father weel, at the Cross, thirty years ago—I reckon you are as late in Edinburgh as at London, four o'clock hours—eh?"

"Not quite so degenerate," replied Fairford; "but certainly many Edinburgh people are so ill-advised as to postpone their dinner till three, that they may have full time to answer their London correspondents."

"London correspondents!" said Mr Maxwell; "and pray, what the devil have the people of Auld Reekie to do with London correspondents?"¹

"The tradesmen must have their goods," said Fairford.

"Can they not buy our own Scottish manufactures, and pick their customers' pockets in a more patriotic manner?"

"Then the ladies must have fashions," said Fairford.

"Can they not busk the plaid over their heads, as their mothers did? A tartan screen, and once a-year a new cokernony from Paris should serve a Countess. But ye have not many of them left, think—Mareschal, Airley, Winton, Wemyss, Balmerino, all passed and gone—ay, ay, the countesses and ladies of quality will scarce take up too much of your ball-room floor with their quality hoops now-a-days."

"There is no want of crowding, however, sir," said Fairford; "they begin to talk of a new Assembly-Room."

"A new Assembly-Room!" said the old Jacobite Laird.—"Ump—I mind quartering three hundred men in the old Assembly-Room—But come, come—I'll ask no more questions—the answers all smell of new lords new lands, and do but spoil my appetite, which were pity, since here comes Mrs Crosbie to say our mutton's ready."

It was even so. Mrs Crosbie had been absent, like Eve, "on hospitable cares intent," a duty which she did not conceive herself exempted from, either by the dignity of her husband's rank in the

¹ Not much in those days, for within my recollection the London post was brought north in a small mail-cart; and men are yet alive who recollect when it came down with only one single letter for Edinburgh, addressed to the manager of the British Linen Company.

² I remember hearing this identical answer given by an old Highland gentleman in the Forty-Five, when he heard of the opening of the New Assembly-Rooms in George Street.

municipality, or the splendour of her Brussels silk gown, or even by the more highly-prized lustre of her birth; for she was born a Maxwell, and allied, as her husband often informed his friends, to several of the first families in the county. She had been handsome, and was still a portly good-looking woman of her years; and though her peep into the kitchen had somewhat heightened her complexion, it was no more than a modest touch of rouge might have done.

The Provost was certainly proud of his lady, nay, some said he was proud of her; for, of the females of the Redgauntlet family there was not a rumour, that, ally where they would, there was a grey mare surely in the stables of their husbands, as there is a white horse inouverman's pictures. The good dame, too, was supposed to have brought a spice of politics into Mr Crosbie's household along with her; and the Provost's enemies at the Council-table of the burgh used to observe, that he uttered there many a bold harangue against the Pretender, and in favour of King George and government, of which he dared not have pronounced a syllable in his own bed-chamber; and that, in fact, his wife's predominating influence had now and then occasioned his acting, or forbearing to act, in a manner very different from his general professions of zeal for Revolutionary principles. If this was in any respect true, it was certain, on the other hand, that Mrs Crosbie, in all external points, seemed to acknowledge the "lawful sway and right supremacy" of the head of the house, and if she did not in truth reverence her husband, she at least seemed to do so.

This stately dame received Mr Maxwell (a cousin of course) with cordiality, and Fairford with civility; answering at the same time with respect, to the magisterial complaints of the Provost, that dinner was just coming up. "But since you changed poor Peter MacAlpine, what used to take care of the town-clock, my dear, it has never gone off all a single day."

"Peter MacAlpin, my dear," said the Provost, "made himself too easy for a person in office, and drunk healths and so forth, which it came no man to drink or to pledge, far less one that is in point of office a servant of the public. I understand that he lost the music-halls in Edinburgh, for playing 'Ower the Water to Charlie,' upon the tenth of June. He is a black sheep, and deserves no encouragement."

"Not a bad tune though, after all," said Summertrees; and, turning to the window, he half-hummed, half-whistled, the air in question, then sang the last verse aloud:—

"Oh I loe weel my Charlie's name,
Though some there be that abhor him;
But oh to see the deil gang hame
Wi' a' the Whigs before him!
Over the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charlie;
Come weal, come wo, we'll gather and go,
And live or die with Charlie."

Mrs Crosbie smiled furtively on the Laird, wearing an aspect at the same time of deep submission; while the Provost, not choosing to

hear his visitor's ditty, took a turn through the room, in unquestioned dignity and independence of authority.

"Aweel, aweel, my dear," said the lady, with a quiet smile of submission, "ye ken these matters best, and you will do your pleasure—they are far above my hand—only, I doubt if ever the town-clock will go right, or your meals be got up so regular as I should wish, till Peter MacAlpin gets his office back again. The body's auld, and can neither work nor want, but he is the only hand to set a clock."

It may be noticed in passing, that, notwithstanding this prediction which, probably, the fair Cassandra had the full means of accomplishing, it was not till the second council-day thereafter that the misdeemeanours of the Jacobite clock-keeper were passed over, and he was once more restored to his occupation of fixing the town's time, and the Provost's dinner-hour.

Upon the present occasion the dinner passed pleasantly away. Summertrees talked and jested with the easy indifference of a man who holds himself superior to his company. He was indeed an important person, as was testified by his portly appearance; his hair laced with *point d'Espagne*; his coat and waistcoat, once richly embroidered, though now almost threadbare; the splendour of his solitaire, and laced ruffles, though the first was sorely creased, and the other sullied; not to forget the length of his silver-hilted rapier. His wit, or rather humour, bordered on the sarcastic, and intimated a discontented man; and although he showed no displeasure when the Provost attempted a repartee, yet it seemed that he permitted it upon mere sufferance, as a fencing-master, engaged with a pupil, will sometimes permit the tyro to hit him, solely by way of encouragement. The Laird's own jests, in the meanwhile, were eminently successful, not only with the Provost and his lady, but with the red-cheeked and red-ribboned servant-maid who waited at table, and who could scarce perform her duty with propriety, so effectual were the explosions of Summertrees. Alan Fairford alone was unmoved among all this mirth; which was the less wonderful, that, besides the important subject which occupied his thoughts, most of the Laird's good things consisted in sly allusions to little parochial or family incidents, with which the Edinburgh visitor was totally unacquainted, so that the laughter of the party sounded in his ear like the idle crackling of thorns under the pot, with this difference, that they did not accompany or second any such useful operation as the boiling thereof.

Fairford was glad when the cloth was withdrawn; and when Provost Crosbie (not without some points of advice from his lady touching the precise mixture of the ingredients) had accomplished the compounding of a noble bowl of punch, at which the old Jacobite's eyes seemed to glisten, the glasses were pushed round it, filled, and withdrawn each by its owner, when the Provost emphatically named the toast, "The King," with an important look to Fairford, which seemed to say, You can have no doubt whom I mean, and therefore there is no occasion to particularise the individual.

Summertrees repeated the toast, with a sly wink to the lady, while Fairford drank his glass in silence.

"Well, young advocate," said the landed proprietor, "I am glad to see there is some shame, if there is little honesty, left in the faculty. Some of your black-gowns, nowadays, have as little of the one as of the other."

"At least, sir," replied Mr Fairford, "I am so much of a lawyer that I am not willingly to enter into disputes which I am not retained to support—it would be but throwing away both time and argument."

"Come, come," said the lady, "we will have no argument in this case about Whig or Tory—the Provost knows what he maun say, and I ken what he should think; and for a' that has come and gane, there may be a time coming when honest men may say what they think, whether they be Provosts or not."

"D'ye hear that, Provost?" said Summertrees; "your wife's a catch, man; you should nail a horse-shoe on your chamber door—ha, ha, ha!"

This sally did not take quite so well as former efforts of the Laird's. The lady drew up, and the Provost said, half aside, "The both board is nae board.¹ You will find the horse-shoe hissing hot, Summertrees."

"You can speak from experience, doubtless, Provost," answered the Laird; "but I crave pardon—I need not tell Mrs Crosbie that we have all respect for the auld and honourable house of Redgauntlet."

"And good reason ye have, that are sae sib to them," quoth the lady, "and kend weel baith them that are here, and them that are nee."

"In troth, and ye may say sae, madam," answered the Laird; "for our Harry Redgauntlet, that suffered at Carlisle, was hand and glove with me; and yet we parted on short leave-taking."

"Ay, Summertrees," said the Provost; "that was when you played eat-the-woodie, and gat the by-name of Pate-in-Peril. I wish you could tell the story to my young friend here. He likes weel to hear a sharp trick, as most lawyers do."

"I wonder at your want of circumspection, Provost," said the Laird,—much after the manner of a singer when declining to sing a song that is quivering upon his tongue's very end. "Ye should know there are some auld stories that cannot be ripped up again with tire safety to all concerned. *Tace* is Latin for a candle."

"I hope," said the lady, "you are not afraid of anything being said out of this house to your prejudice, Summertrees? I have heard the story before; but the oftener I hear it, the more wonderful I think it."

"Yes, madam; but it has been now a wonder of more than nine years, and it is time it should be ended," answered Maxwell.

Fairford now thought it civil to say, "that he had often heard of Mr Maxwell's wonderful escape, and that nothing could be more agreeable to him than to hear the right version of it."

But Summertrees was obdurate, and refused to take up the time with the company with such "auld warld nonsense."

"Weel, weel," said the Provost, "a wilful man maun hae his way."

¹ The true joke is no joke.

What do your folk in the country think about the disturbances that are beginning to spunk out in the colonies?"

"Excellent, sir, excellent. When things come to the worst they will mend, and to the worst they are coming. But as to that nonsense ploy of mine, if ye insist on hearing the particulars,"—said the Laird, who began to be sensible that the period of telling his story gracefully was gliding fast away.

"Nay," said the Provost, "it was not for myself, but this young gentleman."

"Aweel, what for should I not pleasure the young gentleman?—I'll just drink to honest folk at hame and abroad, and deil ane else. And then—but you have heard it before, Mrs Crosbie?"

"Not so often as to think it tiresome, I assure ye," said the lady and without farther preliminaries, the Laird addressed Alan Fairford.

"Ye have heard of a year they call the *forty-five*, young gentleman; when the Southrons' heads made their last acquaintance with Scottish claymores? There was a set of rampaung chields in the country then that they called rebels—I never could find out what for—Some men should have been wi' them that never came, Provost—Skye and the Bush aboon Traquair for that, ye ken.—Weel, the job was settled at last. Cloured crowns were plenty, and raxed necks came into fashion. I dinna mind verra weel what I was doing swaggering about the country with dirk and pistol at my belt for five or six months, or thereaway; but I had a weary waking out of a wild dream. Then did I find myself on foot in a misty morning, with my hand, just for fear of going astray, linked into a handcuff, as they call it, with poor Harry Redgauntlet's fastened into the other; and there we were, trudging along, with about a score more that had thrust their horns ower deep in the bog, just like ourselves, and a sergeant's guard of redcoats, with twa file of dragoons, to keep all quiet, and give us heart to the road. Now, if this mode of travelling was not very pleasant, the object did not particularly recommend it; for you understand, young man, that they did not trust these poor rebel bodies to be tried by juries of their ain kindly countrymen though ane would have thought they would have found Whigs enough in Scotland to hang us all; but they beloved to trounce us away to be tried at Carlisle, where the folk had been so frightened that, had you brought a whole Highland clan at once into the court, they would have put their hands upon their een and cried, 'hang them a', just to be quit of them."

"Ay, ay," said the Provost, "that was a snell law, I grant ye."

"Snell!" said the wife, "snell! I wish they that passed it had the jury I would recommend them to!"

"I suppose the young lawyer thinks it all very right," said Summertrees, looking at Fairford—"an *old* lawyer might have thought otherwise. However, the cudgel was to be found to beat the dog, and they chose a heavy one. Well, I kept my spirits better than my companion, poor fellow; for I had the luck to have neither wife nor child to think about, and Harry Redgauntlet had both one and t'other—You have seen Harry, Mrs Crosbie?"

"In troth have I," said she, with the sigh which we give to early collections, of which the object is no more. "He was not so tall his brother, and a gentler lad every way. After he married the great English fortune, folk called him less of a Scottishman than ward."

"Folk lee'd, then," said Summertrees; "poor Harry was none of our bold-speaking, ranting reivers, that talk about what they did yesterday, or what they will do to-morrow; it was when something was to do at the moment that you should have looked at Harry Redgauntlet. I saw him at Culloden, when all was lost, doing more than plenty of these bleezing braggarts, till the very soldiers that took him cried not to hurt him—for all somebody's orders, Provost—for he was the bravest fellow of them all. Weel, as I went by the side of Harry, and felt him raise my hand up in the mist of the morning, if he wished to wipe his eye—for he had not that freedom without leave—my very heart was like to break for him, poor fellow. In the meanwhile, I had been trying and trying to make my hand as fine as a lady's, to see if I could slip it out of my iron wristband. You may think," he said, laying his broad bony hand on the table, "I had work enough with such a shoulder-of-mutton fist; but if you observe, the shackle-bones are of the largest, and so they were obliged to keep the handcuff wide; at length I got my hand slipped out, and slipped again; and poor Harry was sae deep in his ain thoughts, I could not make him sensible what I was doing."

"Why not?" said Alan Fairford, for whom the tale began to have some interest.

"Because there was an unchancy beast of a dragoon riding close beside us on the other side; and if I had let him into my confidence as well as Harry, it would not have been long before a pistol-ball popped through my bonnet.—Well, I had little for it but to do the best I could for myself; and, by my conscience, it was time, when the gallows was staring me in the face. We were to halt for breakfast at Moffat. Well did I know the moors we were marching over, being hunted and hawked on every acre of ground in very different places. So I waited, you see, till I was on the edge of Errickstane heath—Ye ken the place they call the Marquis's Beef-stand, because the Annandale loons used to put their stolen cattle in there?"

Fairford intimated his ignorance.

"Ye must have seen it as ye came this way; it looks as if four hills were laying their heads together, to shut out daylight from the dark hollow space between them. A d—d deep, black, blackguard-looking abyss of a hole it is, and goes straight down from the road-side, perpendicular as it can do, to be a heathery brae. At the bottom there is a small bit of a brook, that you would think could hardly find way out from the hills that are so closely jammed round it."

"A bad pass, indeed," said Alan.

"You may say that," continued the Laird. "Bad as it was, sir, it was my only chance; and though my very flesh crept when I thought what a rumble I was going to get, yet I kept my heart up the same. And so, just when we came on the edge of this Beef-stand of the Johnstones, I slipped out my hand from the handcuff,

cried to Harry Gauntlet, 'Follow me!'—whisked under the belly of the dragoon horse—flung my plaid round me with the speed of lightning—threw myself on my side, for there was no keeping my feet, and down the brae hurled I, over heather and fern, and black berries, like a barrel down Chalmers's Close, in Auld Reekie. G—sir, I never could help laughing when I think how the scoundrel red-coats must have been bumbazed; for the mist being, as I said, thick, they had little notion, I take it, that they were on the verge of such a dilemma. I was half way down—for rowing is faster wark than running—ere they could get at their arms; and then it was flash, flash, flash—rap, rap, rap—from the edge of the road; but my head was too jumbled to think anything either of that or the hard knocks I got among the stones. I kept my senses thegither, whilk has been thought wonderful by all that ever saw the place; and I helped myself with my hands as gallantly as I could, and to the bottom I came. There I lay for half a moment; but the thoughts of a gallows is worth all the salts and scent-bottles in the world for bringing a man to himself. Up I sprang, like a four-year-auld colt. All the hills were spinning round with me, like so many great big humming-tops. But there was nae time to think of that neither; more especially as the mist had risen a little with the firing. I could see the villains, like sae mony craws on the edge of the brae; and I reckon that they saw me; for some of the loons were beginning to crawl down the hill, but liker auld wives in their red-cloaks, coming frae a field-preaching, than such a souple lad as I was. Accordingly, they soon began to stop and load their pieces. Good-e'en to you, gentlemen, thought I, if that is to be the gate of it. If you have any farther word with me, you maun come as far as Carrie-fraw-gauns. And so off I set, and never buck went faster ower the braes than I did; and I never stopped till I had put three waters, reasonably deep, as the season was rainy, half-a-dozen mountains, and a few thousand acres of the worst moss and ling in Scotland, betwixt me and my friends the red-coats."

"It was that job which got you the name of Pate-in-Peril," said the Provost, filling the glasses, and exclaiming with great emphasis, while his guest, much animated with the recollections which the exploit excited, looked round with an air of triumph for sympathy and applause,—“Here is to your good health; and may you never put your neck in such a venture again.”¹

“Humph!—I do not know,” answered Summertrees. “I am not like to be tempted with another opportunity²—Yet who knows?” And then he made a deep pause.

“May I ask what became of your friend, sir?” said Alan Fairford.

“Ah, poor Harry!” said Summertrees. “I’ll tell you what, sir, it takes time to make up one’s mind to such a venture, as my friend the Provost calls it; and I was told by Neil Maclean,—who was next file to us, but had the luck to escape the gallows by some slight-of-hand trick or other,—that, upon my breaking off poor Harry stood like

¹ See Note R. *Escape of Pate-in-Peril.*

² See Note S. *Another opportunity.*

motionless, although all our brethren in captivity made as much munt as they could, to distract the attention of the soldiers. And he did at last; but he did not know the ground, and either from confusion, or because he judged the descent altogether perpendicular, he fled up the hill to his left, instead of going down at once, and was easily pursued and taken. If he had followed my example, he would have found enough among the shepherds to hide him, and I should have had him as they did me, on bearmeal scones and braxy mutton,¹ till winter days come round again."

"He suffered, then, for his share in the insurrection?" said Alan. "You may swear that," said Summertrees. "His blood was too thick to be spared when that sort of paint was in request. He suffered, as you call it—that is, he was murdered in cold blood, with many pretty fellow besides.—Well, we may have our day next—what is destined is not forgiven—they think us all dead and buried—but——" where he filled his glass, and muttering some indistinct denunciations, drank it off, and assumed his usual manner, which had been a little disturbed towards the end of the narrative.

"What became of Mr Redgauntlet's child?" said Fairford.

"*Mister* Redgauntlet!—He was Sir Henry Redgauntlet, as his father, if the child now lives, will be Sir Arthur—I called him Harry in intimacy, and Redgauntlet, as the chief of his name—His proper name was Sir Henry Redgauntlet."

"His son, therefore, is dead?" said Alan Fairford. "It is a pity a brave line should draw to a close."

"He has left a brother," said Summertrees, "Edward Hugh Redgauntlet, who has now the representation of the family. And well he may; for though he be unfortunate in many respects, he will keep up the honour of the house better than a boy bred up amongst these Peter Whigs, the relations of his elder brother Sir Henry's lady. When they are on no good terms with the Redgauntlet line—bitter whigs they are in every sense. It was a runaway match betwixt Sir Henry and his lady. Poor thing, they would not allow her to see him when in confinement—they had even the meanness to leave him without pecuniary assistance; and as all his own property was seized on and plundered, he would have wanted common necessities, but for the attachment of a fellow who was a famous fiddler—a blind man—I have seen him with Sir Henry myself, both before the affair broke out and while it was going on. I have heard that he fiddled the streets of Carlisle, and carried what money he got to his sister while he was confined in the castle."

"I do not believe a word of it," said Mrs Crosbie, kindling with indignation. "A Redgauntlet would have died twenty times before he had touched a fiddler's wages."

"Hout fye—hout fye—all nonsense and pride," said the Laird of Summertrees. "Scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings, cousin Crosbie—ye little ken what some of your friends were obliged to do yon day for a sowp of brose, or a bit of bannock.—G—d, I carried a

BRAXY MUTTON.—The flesh of sheep that has died of disease, not by the hand of a butcher. In pastoral countries it is used as food with little scruple.

cutler's wheel for several weeks, partly for need, and partly for disguise—there I went bizz—bizz—whizz—zizz, at every auld wife's door; and if ever you want your shears sharpened, Mrs Crosbie, I am the lad to do it for you, if my wheel was but in order."

"You must ask my leave first," said the Provost; "for I have been told you had some queer fashions of taking a kiss instead of a penny if you liked your customer."

"Come, come, Provost," said the lady, rising, "if the maud gets abune the meal with you, it is time for me to take myself away—And you will come to my room, gentlemen, when you want a cup of tea."

Alan Fairford was not sorry for the lady's departure. She seemed too much alive to the honour of the house of Redgauntlet, though only a fourth cousin, not to be alarmed by the inquiries which he proposed to make after the whereabouts of its present head. Strange confused suspicions arose in his mind, from his imperfect recollection of the tale of Wandering Willie, and the idea forced itself upon him, that his friend Darsie Latimer might be the son of the unfortunate Sir Henry. But before indulging in such speculations, the point was to discover what had actually become of him. If he were in the hands of his uncle, might there not exist some rivalry in fortune, or rank, which might induce so stern a man as Redgauntlet to use unfair measures towards a youth whom he would find himself unable to mould to his purpose? He considered these points in silence, during several revolutions of the glasses as they wheeled in galaxy round the bowl, waiting until the Provost, agreeably to his own proposal, should mention the subject, for which he had expressly introduced him to Mr Maxwell of Summertrees.

Apparently the Provost had forgot his promise, or at least was in no great haste to fulfil it. He debated with great earnestness upon the stamp act, which was then impending over the American colonies, and upon other political subjects of the day, but said not a word of Redgauntlet. Alan soon saw that the investigation he meditated must advance, if at all, on his own special motion, and determined to proceed accordingly.

Acting upon this resolution, he took the first opportunity afforded by a pause in the discussion of colonial politics, to say, "I must remind you, Provost Crosbie, of your kind promise to procure some intelligence upon the subject I am so anxious about."

"Gadso!" said the Provost, after a moment's hesitation, "it is very true—Mr Maxwell, we wish to consult you on a piece of important business. You must know—indeed I think you must have heard, that the fishermen at Brokenburn, and higher up the Solway, have made a raid upon Quaker Geddes's stake-nets, and levelled all with the sands."

"In troth I heard it, Provost, and I was glad to hear the scoundrels had so much pluck left, as to right themselves against a fashion which would make the upper heritors a sort of clocking-hens to hatch the fish that folk below them were to catch and eat."

"Well, sir," said Alan, "that is not the present point. But a young friend of mine was with Mr Geddes at the time this violent

cedure took place, and he has not since been heard of. Now, our end, the Provost, thinks that you may be able to advise——” Here he was interrupted by the Provost and Summertrees speaking out both at once, the first endeavouring to disclaim all interest in the question, and the last to evade giving an answer.

“Me think!” said the Provost; “I never thought twice about Mr Fairford; it was neither fish, nor flesh, nor salt herring of me.”

“And I ‘able to advise!’” said Mr Maxwell of Summertrees; “what the devil can I advise you to do, excepting to send the bell-brother through the town to cry your lost sheep, as they do spaniel dogs and stray ponies!”

“With your pardon,” said Alan, calmly, but resolutely, “I must give a more serious answer.”

“Why, Mr Advocate,” answered Summertrees, “I thought it was our business to give advice to the lieges, and not to take it from our stupid country gentlemen.”

“If not exactly advice, it is sometimes our duty to ask questions,” said Maxwell.

“Ay, sir, when you have your bag-wig and your gown on, we must allow you the usual privilege of both gown and petticoat, to ask what questions you please. But when you are out of your canonicals, the privilege is altered. How come you, sir, to suppose that I have any business with this riotous proceeding, or should know more than you do what happened there? the question proceeds on an uncivil position.”

“I will explain,” said Alan, determined to give Mr Maxwell no opportunity of breaking off the conversation. “You are an intimate friend of Mr Redgauntlet—he is accused of having been engaged in this riot, and of having placed under forcible restraint the person of my friend, Darsie Latimer, a young man of property and consequence, whose fate I am here for the express purpose of investigating. This is the plain state of the case; and all parties concerned,—your friend, in particular,—will have reason to be thankful for the temperate manner in which it is my purpose to conduct the matter, if I am treated with proportionate frankness.”

“You have misunderstood me,” said Maxwell, with a tone changed to more composure; “I told you I was the friend of the late Sir Henry Redgauntlet, who was executed in 1745, at Hairbie, near Carlisle; but I know no one who at present bears the name of Redgauntlet.”

“You know Mr Herries of Birrenswark,” said Allan, smiling, “to whom the name of Redgauntlet belongs?”

Maxwell darted a keen reproachful look towards the Provost, but instantly smoothed his brow, and changed his tone to that of confidence and candour.

“You must not be angry, Mr Fairford, that the poor persecuted injurers are a little upon the *qui vive* when such clever young men as you are making inquiries after us. I myself now, though I am a little out of the scrape, and may cock my hat at the Cross as I best like, whether in sunshine or moonshine, have been yet so much accustomed to

walk with the lap of my cloak cast over my face, that, faith, if redcoat walk suddenly up to me, I wish for my wheel and whetstone again for a moment. Now Redgauntlet, poor fellow, is far worse off—he is, you may have heard, still under the lash of the law,—the mark of the beast is still on his forehead, poor gentleman,—and that makes us cautious—very cautious, which I am sure there is no occasion to be towards you, as no one of your appearance and manners would wish to trepan a gentleman under misfortune.”

“On the contrary, sir,” said Fairford, “I wish to afford Mr Redgauntlet’s friends an opportunity to get him out of the scrape, by procuring the instant liberation of my friend Darsie Latimer. I will engage that, if he has sustained no greater bodily harm than a short confinement, the matter may be passed over quietly, without inquiry; but to attain this end, so desirable for the man who has committed a great and recent infraction of the laws, which he has before grievously offended, very speedy reparation of the wrong must be rendered.”

Maxwell seemed lost in reflection, and exchanged a glance or two not of the most comfortable or congratulatory kind, with his host, the Provost. Fairford rose and walked about the room, to allow them an opportunity of conversing together; for he was in hopes that the impression he had visibly made upon Summertrees was likely to ripen into something favourable to his purpose. They took the opportunity, and engaged in whispers to each other, eagerly and reproachfully on the part of the Laird, while the Provost answered in an embarrassed and apologetical tone. Some broken words of the conversation reached Fairford, whose presence they seemed to forget, as he stood at the bottom of the room, apparently intent upon examining the figures upon a fine Indian screen, a present to the Provost from his brother, captain of a vessel in the Company’s service. What he overheard made it evident that his errand, and the obstinacy with which he pursued it, occasioned altercation between the whisperers.

Maxwell at length let out the words, “A good fright; and so send him home with his tail scalded, like a dog that has come privateering on strange premises.”

The Provost’s negative was strongly interposed—“Not to be thought of”—“making bad worse”—“my situation”—“my utility”—“you cannot conceive how obstinate—just like his father.”

They then whispered more closely, and at length the Provost raised his drooping crest, and spoke in a cheerful tone. “Come, sit down to your glass, Mr Fairford; we have laid our heads together and you shall see it will not be our fault if you are not quite pleased and Mr Darsie Latimer let loose to take his fiddle under his neck again. But Summertrees thinks it will require you to put yourself into some bodily risk, which maybe you may not be so keen of.”

“Gentlemen,” said Fairford, “I will not certainly shun any risk by which my object may be accomplished; but I bind it on your consciences—on yours, Mr Maxwell, as a man of honour and a gentleman; and on yours, Provost, as a magistrate, and a loyal subject, that you do not mislead me in this matter.”

"Nay, as for me," said Summertrees, "I will tell you the truth at once, and fairly own that I can certainly find you the means of seeing Redgauntlet, poor man; and that I will do, if you require it, and conjure him also to treat you as your errand requires; but poor Redgauntlet is much changed—indeed, to say truth, his temper never was the best in the world; however, I will warrant you from any very great danger."

"I will warrant myself from such," said Fairford, "by carrying a proper force with me."

"Indeed," said Summertrees, "you will do no such thing; for, in the first place, do you think that we will deliver up the poor fellow to the hands of the Philistines, when, on the contrary, my only reason for furnishing you with the clew I am to put into your hands, is to settle the matter amicably on all sides? And, secondly, his intelligence is so good, that were you coming near him with soldiers, constables, or the like, I shall answer for it, you will never lay salt on his tail."

Fairford mused for a moment. He considered that to gain sight of this man, and knowledge of his friend's condition, were advantages to be purchased at every personal risk; and he saw plainly, that were he to take the course most safe for himself, and call in the assistance of the law, it was clear he would either be deprived of the intelligence necessary to guide him, or that Redgauntlet would be apprised of his danger, and might probably leave the country, carrying his captive along with him. He therefore related, "I put myself on your honour, Mr Maxwell; and I will go on to visit your friend. I have little doubt I shall find him sensible to reason; and that I shall receive from him a satisfactory account of Mr Latimer."

"I have little doubt that you will," said Mr Maxwell of Summertrees; "but still I think it will be only in the long-run, and after having sustained some delay and inconvenience. My warrant does no farther."

"I will take it as it is given," said Alan Fairford. "But let me ask, would it not be better, since you value your friend's safety so highly, and surely would not willingly compromise mine, that the Provost or you should go with me to this man, if he is within any reasonable distance, and try to make him hear reason?"

"Me!—I will not go my foot's length," said the Provost; "and that, Mr Alan, you may be well assured of. Mr Redgauntlet is my wife's fourth cousin, that is undeniable; but were he the last of her name and mine both, it would ill besit my office to be communing with rebels."

"Ay, or drinking with nonjurors," said Maxwell, filling his glass. "I would as soon expect to have met Claverhouse at a field-preaching. And as for myself, Mr Fairford, I cannot go for just the opposite reason. It would be *infra dig.* in the Provost of this most flourishing and loyal town to associate with Redgauntlet; and for me it would be *noscitur a socio*. There would be post to London, with the tidings that two such Jacobites as Redgauntlet and I had met on a braeside—the Habeas Corpus would be suspended—Fame

would sound a charge from Carlisle to the Land's-end—and who knows but the very wind of the rumour might blow my estate from between my fingers, and my body over Errickstane Brae again? No; no; bide a gliff—I will go into the Provost's closet, and write a letter to Redgauntlet, and direct you how to deliver it.”

“There is pen and ink in the office,” said the Provost, pointing to the door of an inner apartment, in which he had his walnut-tree desk and east-country cabinet.

“A pen that can write, I hope?” said the old Laird.

“It can write and spell baith in right hands,” answered the Provost, as the Laird retired and shut the door behind him.

CHAPTER XIII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

THE room was no sooner deprived of Mr Maxwell of Summerhall's presence, than the Provost looked very warily above, beneath, and around the apartment, hitched his chair towards that of his remaining guest, and began to speak in a whisper which could not have startled “the smallest mouse that creeps on floor.”

“Mr Fairford,” said he, “you are a good lad; and, what is more, you are my auld friend your father's son. Your father has been agent for this burgh for years, and has a good deal to say with the council; so there have been a sort of obligations between him and me; it may have been now on this side and now on that; but obligations there have been. I am but a plain man, Mr Fairford; but I hope you understand me?”

“I believe you mean me well, Provost; and I am sure,” replied Fairford, “you can never better show your kindness than on this occasion.”

“That's it—that's the very point I would be at, Mr Alan,” replied the Provost; “besides, I am, as becomes well my situation, a staunch friend to Kirk and King, meaning this present establishment in church and state; and so, as I was saying, you may command my best—advice.”

“I hope for your assistance and co-operation also,” said the youth.

“Certainly, certainly,” said the wary magistrate. “Well, now you see one may love the Kirk, and yet not ride on the rigging of it, and one may love the King, and yet not be cramming him eternally down the throat of the unhappy folk that may chance to like another king better. I have friends and connections among them, Mr Fairford, as your father may have clients—they are flesh and blood like ourselves, these poor Jacobite bodies—sons of Adam and Eve, after all; and therefore—I hope you understand me!—I am a plain spoken man.”

“I am afraid I do *not* quite understand you,” said Fairford; “an

you have anything to say to me in private, my dear Provost, you had better come quickly out with it, for the Laird of Summertrees must finish his letter in a minute or two."

"Not a bit, man. Pate is a lang-headed fellow, but his pen does not clear the paper as his greyhound does the Tinwald Furs. I gave him a wipe about that, if you noticed; I can say anything to Pate-Peril—indeed, he is my wife's near kinsman."

"But your advice, Provost," said Alan, who perceived that, like a bay horse, the worthy magistrate always started off from his own purpose just when he seemed approaching to it.

"Weel, you shall have it in plain terms, for I am a plain man.—We see, we will suppose that any friend like yourself were in the deepest hole in the Nith, and making a sprattle for your life. Now, you see, such being the case, I have little chance of helping you, being a fat, short-armed man, and no swimmer, and what would be the use of my jumping in after you?"

"I understand you, I think," said Alan Fairford. "You think that Darsie Latimer is in danger of his life."

"Me!—I think nothing about it, Mr Alan; but if he were, as I trust he is not, he is nae drap's blood akin to you, Mr Alan."

"But here your friend, Summertrees," said the young lawyer, "offers me a letter to this Redgauntlet of yours—What say you to that?"

"Me!" ejaculated the Provost, "me, Mr Alan! I say neither for nor stye to it. But ye dinna ken what it is to look a Redgauntlet in the face;—better try my wife, who is but a fourth cousin, before ye venture on the Laird himself—just say something about the Revolution, and see what a look she can gie you."

"I shall leave you to stand all the shots from that battery, Provost," replied Fairford. "But speak out like a man—Do you think Summertrees means fairly by me?"

"Fairly—he is just coming—fairly? I am a plain man, Mr Fairford—but ye said *fairly*?"

"I do so," replied Alan, "and it is of importance to me to know, and to you to tell me if such is the case; for if you do not, you may be an accomplice to murder before the fact, and that under circumstances which may bring it near to murder under trust."

"Murder!—who spoke of murder?" said the Provost; "no danger of that, Mr Alan—only, if I were you—to speak my plain mind"—Here he approached his mouth to the ear of the young lawyer, and, after another acute pang of travail, was safely delivered of his advice in the following abrupt words:—"Take a keek into Pate's letter before ye deliver it."

Fairford started, looked the Provost hard in the face, and was silent; while Mr Crosbie, with the self-approbation of one who has at length brought himself to the discharge of a great duty, at the expense of a considerable sacrifice, nodded and winked to Alan, as if enforcing his advice; and then swallowing a large glass of punch, concluded, with the sigh of a man released from a heavy burden, "I am a plain man, Mr Fairford."

"A plain man?" said Maxwell, who entered the room at that

moment with the letter in his hand,—“Provost, I never heard you make use of the word, but when you had some sly turn of your own to work out.”

The Provost looked silly enough, and the Laird of Summertrees directed a keen and suspicious glance upon Alan Fairford, who sustained it with professional intrepidity.—There was a moment's pause.

“I was trying,” said the Provost, “to dissuade our young friend from his wildgoose expedition.”

“And I,” said Fairford, “am determined to go through with it. Trusting myself to you, Mr Maxwell, I conceive that I rely, as I before said, on the word of a gentleman.”

“I will warrant you,” said Maxwell, “from all serious consequences—some inconveniences you must look to suffer.”

“To these I shall be resigned,” said Fairford, “and stand prepared to run my risk.”

“Well, then,” said Summertrees, “you must go——”

“I will leave you to yourselves, gentlemen,” said the Provost rising; “when you have done with your crack, you will find me at my wife's tea-table.”

“And a more accomplished old woman never drank cat-lap,” said Maxwell, as he shut the door; “the last word has him, speak it who will. And yet, because he is a whilly-whaw body, and has a plausible tongue of his own, and is well enough connected, and especially because nobody could ever find out whether he is Whig or Tory, this is the third time they have made him Provost!—But to the matter in hand. This letter, Mr Fairford,” putting a sealed one into his hand, “is addressed, you observe, to Mr H—— of B——, and contains your credentials for that gentleman, who is also known by his family name of Redgauntlet, but less frequently addressed by it because it is mentioned something invidiously in a certain Act of Parliament. I have little doubt he will assure you of your friend's safety, and in a short time place him at freedom—that is, supposing him under present restraint. But the point is, to discover where he is—and, before you are made acquainted with this necessary part of the business, you must give me your assurance of honour that you will acquaint no one, either by word or letter, with the expedition which you now propose to yourself.”

“How, sir?” answered Alan; “can you expect that I will not take the precaution of informing some person of the route I am about to take, that in case of accident it may be known where I am, and with what purpose I have gone thither?”

“And can you expect,” answered Maxwell, in the same tone, “that I am to place my friend's safety, not merely in your hands, but in those of any person you may choose to confide in, and who may use the knowledge to his destruction? Na, na! I have pledged my word for your safety, and you must give me yours to be private in the matter—giff-gaff, you know.”

Alan Fairford could not help thinking that this obligation to secrecy gave a new and suspicious colouring to the whole transaction; but, considering that his friend's release might depend upon

is accepting the condition, he gave it in the terms proposed, and with the purpose of abiding by it.

"And now, sir," he said, "whither am I to proceed with this letter? Is Mr Herries at Brokenburn?"

"He is not; I do not think he will come thither again, until the business of the stake-nets be hushed up, nor would I advise him to do so—the Quakers, with all their demureness, can bear malice as long as other folk; and though I have not the prudence of Mr Provost, who refuses to ken where his friends are concealed during adversity, yet, perchance, he should be asked to contribute to their relief, yet I do not think it necessary or prudent to inquire into Redgauntlet's wanderings, poor man, but wish to remain at perfect freedom to answer, if asked at, that I ken nothing of the matter. You must, then, go to old Tom Trumbull's at Annan—Tam Turnpenny, as they call him,—and he is sure either to know where Redgauntlet is himself, or to find some one who can give a shrewd guess. But you must attend that old Turnpenny will answer no question on such a subject without you give him the passport, which at present you must do, by asking him the age of the moon; if he answers, 'Not light enough to land a cargo,' you are to answer, 'Then plague on Aberdeen Almanacks,' and upon that he will hold free intercourse with you.—and now, I would advise you to lose no time, for the parole is often changed—and take care of yourself among these moonlight lads, for laws and lawyers do not stand very high in their favour."

"I will set out this instant," said the young barrister; "I will but bid the Provost and Mrs Crosbie farewell, and then get on horse-back as soon as the hostler of the George Inn can saddle him;—as for the mugglers, I am neither gauger nor supervisor, and, like the man who met the devil, if they have nothing to say to me, I have nothing to say to them."

"You are a mettled young man," said Summertrees, evidently with increasing good will, on observing an alertness and contempt of danger, which perhaps he did not expect from Alan's appearance and profession,—“a very mettled young fellow indeed! and it is almost a pity ——” Here he stopped short.

"What is a pity?" said Fairford.

"It is almost a pity that I cannot go with you myself, or at least end a trusty guide."

They walked together to the bedchamber of Mrs Crosbie, for it was that asylum that the ladies of the period dispensed their tea, when the parlour was occupied by the punch-bowl."

"You have been good bairns to-night, gentlemen," said Mrs Crosbie; "I am afraid, Summertrees, that the Provost has given you bad browst; you are not used to quit the lee-side of the punchbowl in such a hurry. I say nothing to you, Mr Fairford, for you are too young a man yet for stoup and bicker; but I hope you will not tell the Edinburgh fine folk that the Provost has scrimped you of your gigie, as the sang says?"

"I am much obliged for the Provost's kindness, and yours, madam," replied Alan; "but the truth is, I have still a long ride before me this evening, and the sooner I am on horseback the better."

"This evening?" said the Provost, anxiously; "had you not better take daylight with you to-morrow morning?"

"Mr Fairford will ride as well in the cool of the evening," said Summertrees, taking the word out of Alan's mouth.

The Provost said no more, nor did his wife ask any questions, nor testify any surprise at the suddenness of their guest's departure.

Having drunk tea, Alan Fairford took leave with the usual ceremony. The Laird of Summertrees seemed studious to prevent any farther communication between him and the Provost, and remained lounging on the landing-place of the stair while they made their adieus—heard the Provost ask if Alan proposed a speedy return, and the latter reply, that his stay was uncertain, and witnessed the parting shake of the hand, which, with a pressure more warm than usual, and a tremulous, "God bless and prosper you!" Mr Crosbie bestowed on his young friend. Maxwell even strolled with Fairford as far as the George, although resisting all his attempts at farther inquiry into the affairs of Redgauntlet, and referring him to Tom Trumbull, alias Turnpenny, for the particulars which he might find it necessary to inquire into.

At length Alan's hack was produced; an animal long in neck, and high in bone, accoutred with a pair of saddle-bags containing the rider's travelling wardrobe. Proudly surmounting his small stock of necessities, and no way ashamed of a mode of travelling which a modern Mr Silvertongue would consider as the last of degradations, Alan Fairford took leave of the old Jacobite, Pate-in-Peril, and set forward on the road to the loyal burgh of Annan. His reflections during his ride were none of the most pleasant. He could not disguise from himself that he was venturing rather too rashly into the power of outlawed and desperate persons; for with such only a man in the situation of Redgauntlet could be supposed to associate. There were other grounds for apprehension. Several marks of intelligence betwixt Mrs Crosbie and the Laird of Summertrees had not escaped Alan's acute observation; and it was plain that the Provost's inclinations towards him, which he believed to be sincere and good, were not firm enough to withstand the influence of this league between his wife and friend. The Provost's adieus, like Macbeth's amen, had stuck in his throat, and seemed to intimate that he apprehended more than he dared give utterance to.

Laying all these matters together, Alan thought, with no little anxiety, on the celebrated lines of Shakespeare,

— "A drop,
That in the ocean seeks another drop," &c.

But pertinacity was a strong feature in the young lawyer's character. He was, and always had been, totally unlike the "horse hot at hand," who tires before noon through his own over eager exertions in the beginning of the day. On the contrary, his first efforts seemed frequently inadequate to accomplishing his purpose, whatever that for the time might be; and it was only as the difficulties of the task increased that his mind seemed to acquire the energy necessary to combat and subdue them. If, therefore, he went anxiously forward

upon his uncertain and perilous expedition, the reader must acquit him of all idea, even in a passing thought, of the possibility of abandoning his search, and resigning Darsie Latimer to his destiny.

A couple of hours' riding brought him to the little town of Annan, situated on the shores of the Solway, between eight and nine o'clock. The sun had set, but the day was not yet ended; and when he had alighted and seen his horse properly cared for at the principal inn of the place, he was readily directed to Mr Maxwell's friend, old Tom Trumbull, with whom everybody seemed well acquainted. He endeavoured to fish out from the lad that acted as a guide, something of this man's situation and profession; but the general expressions of "a very decent man"—"a very honest body"—"weel to pass in the world," and suchlike, were all that could be extracted from him; and while Fairford was following up the investigation with closer interrogatories, the lad put an end to them by knocking at the door of Mr Trumbull, whose decent dwelling was a little distance from the town, and considerably nearer to the sea. It was one of a little row of houses running down to the waterside, and having gardens and other accommodations behind. There was heard within the uplifting of a Scottish psalm; and the boy saying, "they are at exercise, sir," gave intimation they might not be admitted till prayers were over.

When, however, Fairford repeated the summons with the end of his whip, the singing ceased, and Mr Trumbull himself, with his psalm-book in his hand, kept open by the insertion of his forefinger between the leaves, came to demand the meaning of this unseasonable interruption.

Nothing could be more different than his whole appearance seemed to be from the confidant of a desperate man, and the associate of outlaws in their unlawful enterprises. He was a tall, thin, bony figure, with white hair combed straight down on each side of his face, and an iron-grey hue of complexion; where the lines, or rather, as Quin said of Macklin, the cordage of his countenance were so sternly adapted to a devotional and even ascetic expression, that they left no room for any indication of reckless daring, or sly dissimulation. In short, Trumbull appeared a perfect specimen of the rigid old Covenanter, who said only what he thought right, acted on no other principle but that of duty, and, if he committed errors, did so under the full impression that he was serving God rather than man.

"Do you want me, sir?" he said to Fairford, whose guide had slunk to the rear, as if to escape the rebuke of the severe old man,— "We were engaged, and it is the Saturday night."

Alan Fairford's preconceptions were so much deranged by this man's appearance and manner, that he stood for a moment bewildered, and would as soon have thought of giving a cant pass-word to a clergyman descending from the pulpit, as to the respectable father of a family just interrupted in his prayers for and with the objects of his care. Hastily concluding Mr Maxwell had passed some idle jest on him, or rather that he had mistaken the person to whom he was directed, he asked if he spoke to Mr Trumbull.

"To Thomas Trumbull," answered the old man—"What may be

your business, sir?" And he glanced his eye to the book he held in his hand, with a sigh like that of a saint desirous of dissolution.

"Do you know Mr Maxwell of Summertrees?" said Fairford.

"I have heard of such a gentleman in the country-side, but have no acquaintance with him," answered Mr Trumbull; "he is, as I have heard, a Papist; for the whore that sitteth on the seven hills ceaseth not yet to pour forth the cup of her abomination on these parts."

"Yet he directed me hither, my good friend," said Alan. "Is there another of your name in this town of Annan?"

"None," replied Mr Trumbull, "since my worthy father was removed; he was indeed a shining light.—I wish you good even, sir."

"Stay one single instant," said Fairford; "this is a matter of life and death."

"Not more than the casting the burden of our sins where they should be laid," said Thomas Trumbull, about to shut the door in the inquirer's face.

"Do you know," said Alan Fairford, "the Laird of Redgauntlet?"

"Now Heaven defend me from treason and rebellion!" exclaimed Trumbull. "Young gentleman, you are importunate. I live here among my own people, and do not consort with Jacobites and mass-mongers."

He seemed about to shut the door, but did *not* shut it, a circumstance which did not escape Alan's notice.

"Mr Redgauntlet is sometimes," he said, "called Herries of Birrenswork; perhaps you may know him under that name."

"Friend you are uncivil," answered Mr Trumbull; "honest men have enough to do to keep one name undefiled. I ken nothing about those who have two. Good-even to you, friend."

He was now about to slam the door in his visitor's face without farther ceremony, when Alan, who had observed symptoms that the name of Redgauntlet did not seem altogether so indifferent to him as he pretended, arrested his purpose by saying, in a low voice, "At least you can tell me what age the moon is?"

The old man started, as if from a trance, and before answering surveyed the querist with a keen penetrating glance, which seemed to say, "Are you really in possession of this key to my confidence, or do you speak from mere accident?"

To this keen look of scrutiny, Fairford replied by a smile of intelligence.

The iron muscles of the old man's face did not, however, relax, as he dropped, in a careless manner, the countersign, "Not light enough to land a cargo."

"Then plague of all Aberdeen Almanacks!"

"And plague of all fools that waste time," said Thomas Trumbull. "Could you not have said as much at first?—And standing wasting time, and encouraging lookers-on, in the open street too? Come in by—in by."

He drew his visitor into the dark entrance of the house, and shut the door carefully; then putting his head into an apartment which the murmurs within announced to be filled with the family, he said

loud, "A work of necessity and mercy—Malachi, take the book—You will sing six double verses of the hundred and nineteen, and you may lecture out of the Lamentations. And, Malachi,"—this he said in an undertone,—“see you give them a screed of doctrine that will last them till I come back; or else these inconsiderate lads will be out of the house, and away to the public, wasting their precious time, and, it may be, putting themselves in the way of missing the morning tide.”

An inarticulate answer from within intimated Malachi's acquiescence in the commands imposed; and Mr Trumbull, shutting the door, muttered something about fast bind, fast find, turned the key, and put it into his pocket; and then bidding his visitor have a care of his steps, and make no noise, he led him through the house, and out at a back-door, into a little garden. Here a plaited alley conducted them, without the possibility of their being seen by any neighbour, to a door in the garden-wall, which being opened, proved to be a private entrance into a three-stalled stable; in one of which was a horse, that whinnied on their entrance. "Hush, hush!" cried the old man, and presently seconded his exhortations to silence by throwing a handful of corn into the manger, and the horse soon converted his acknowledgment of their presence into the usual sound of munching and grinding his provender.

As the light was now falling fast, the old man, with much more alertness than might have been expected from the rigidity of his figure, closed the window-shutters in an instant, produced phosphorus and matches, and lighted a stable-lantern, which he placed on the corn-bin, and then addressed Fairford. "We are private here, young man; and as some time has been wasted already, you will be so kind as to tell me what is your errand. Is it about the way of business, or the other job?"

"My business with you, Mr Trumbull, is to request you will find me the means of delivering this letter, from Mr Maxwell of Summerrees to the Laird of Redgauntlet."

"Humph—fashious job!—Pate Maxwell will still be the auld man—always Pate-in-Peril—Craig-in-Peril, for what I know. Let me see the letter from him."

He examined it with much care, turning it up and down, and looking at the seal very attentively. "All's right, I see; it has the private mark for haste and speed. I bless my Maker that I am no great man, or great man's fellow; and so I think no more of these passages than just to help them forward in the way of business. You are an utter stranger in these parts, I warrant?"

Fairford answered in the affirmative.

"Ay—I never saw them make a wiser choice—I must call some one to direct you what to do—Stay, we must go to him, I believe. You are well recommended to me, friend, and doubtless trusty; otherwise you may see more than I would like to show, or am in the case of showing in the common line of business."

Saying this, he placed his lantern on the ground beside the post of one of the empty stalls, drew up a small spring bolt which secured it to the floor, and then forcing the post to one side, discovered a small

trap-door. "Follow me," he said, and dived into the subterranean descent to which this secret aperture gave access.

Fairford plunged after him, not without apprehensions of more kinds than one, but still resolved to prosecute the adventure.

The descent, which was not above six feet, led to a very narrow passage, which seemed to have been constructed for the precise purpose of excluding every one who chanced to be an inch more in girth than was his conductor. A small vaulted room, of about eight feet square, received them at the end of this lane. Here Mr Trumbull left Fairford alone, and returned for an instant, as he said, to shut his concealed trap-door.

Fairford liked not his departure, as it left him in utter darkness; besides that his breathing was much affected by a strong and stifling smell of spirits, and other articles of a savour more powerful than agreeable to the lungs. He was very glad, therefore, when he heard the returning steps of Mr Trumbull, who, when once more by his side, opened a strong though narrow door in the wall, and conveyed Fairford into an immense magazine of spirit-casks, and other articles of contraband trade.

There was a small light at the end of this range of well-stocked subterranean vaults, which, upon a low whistle, began to flicker and move towards them. An undefined figure, holding a dark lantern, with the light averted, approached them, whom Mr Trumbull thus addressed:—Why were you not at worship, Job; and this Saturday at e'en?"

"Swanston was loading the Jenny, sir; and I stayed to serve out the article."

"True—a work of necessity, and in the way of business. Does the Jumping Jenny sail this tide?"

"Ay, ay, sir; she sails for——"

"I did not ask you *where* she sailed for, Job," said the old gentleman, interrupting him. "I thank my Maker, I know nothing of their incomings or outgoings. I sell my article fairly and in the ordinary way of business; and I wash my hands of everything else. But what I wished to know is, whether the gentleman called the Laird of the Solway Lakes is on the other side of the Border even now?"

"Ay, ay," said Job, "the Laird is something in my own line, you know—a little contraband or so. There is a statute for him—But no matter; he took the sands after the splore at the Quaker's fish-traps yonder; for he has a leal heart the Laird, and is always true to the country-side. But avast—is all snug here?"

So saying, he suddenly turned on Alan Fairford the light side of the lantern he carried, who, by the transient gleam which it threw in passing on the man who bore it, saw a huge figure, upwards of six feet high, with a rough-hairy cap on his head, and a set of features corresponding to his bulky frame. He thought also he observed pistols at his belt.

"I will answer for this gentleman," said Mr Trumbull; "he must be brought to speech of the Laird."

"That will be kittle steering," said the subordinate personage;

for I understood that the Laird and his folk were no sooner on the her side than the land-sharks were on them, and some mounted posters from Carlisle; and so they were obliged to split and wander. There are new brooms out to sweep the country of them they say; for the brush was a hard one; and they say there was a d drowned;—he was not one of the Laird's gang, so there was the ss matter."

"Peace! prithee, peace, Job Rutledge," said honest, pacific Mr Trumbull. "I wish thou couldst remember, man, that I desire to know nothing of your roars and splores, your brooms and brushes. I dwell here among my own people; and I sell my commodity to m who comes in the way of business; and so wash my hands of all consequences, as becomes a quiet subject and an honest man. I ever take payment, save in ready money."

"Ay, ay," muttered he with the lantern, "your worship, Mr Trumbull, understands that in the way of business."

"Well, I hope you will one day know, Job," answered Mr Trumbull,—“the comfort of a conscience void of offence, and that fears neither gauger nor collector, neither excise nor customs. The business is to pass this gentleman to Cumberland upon earnest business, and to procure him speech with the Laird of the Solway Lakes—I suppose that can be done? Now I think Nanty Ewart, if he sails with the brig this morning tide, is the man to set him forward."

"Ay, ay, truly is he," said Job; "never man knew the Border, ale and fell, pasture and ploughland, better than Nanty; and he can always bring him to the Laird, too, if you are sure the gentleman's right. But indeed that's his own look-out; for were he the best man in Scotland, and the chairman of the d—d Board to boot, and had fifty men at his back, he were as well not visit the Laird for anything but good. As for Nanty, he is word and blow, a d—d deal fiercer than Cristie Nixon that they keep such a din about. I have seen them both tried, by——"

Fairford now found himself called upon to say something; yet his feelings, upon finding himself thus completely in the power of aunting hypocrite, and of his retainer, who had so much the air of a determined ruffian, joined to the strong and abominable fume which they snuffed up with indifference, while it almost deprived him of respiration, combined to render utterance difficult. He stated, however, that he had no evil intentions towards the Laird, as they called him, but was only the bearer of a letter to him on particular business, from Mr Maxwell of Summertrees.

"Ay, ay," said Job, "that may be well enough; and if Mr Trumbull is satisfied that the service is right, why, we will give you a cast the Jumping Jenny this tide, and Nanty Ewart will put you on a way of finding the Laird, I warrant you."

"I may for the present return, I presume, to the inn where I left my horse?" said Fairford.

"With pardon," replied Mr Trumbull, "you have been ower far en with us for that; but Job will take you to a place where you may sleep rough till he calls you. I will bring you what little baggage you can need—for those who go on such errands must not

be dainty. I will myself see after your horse, for a merciful man is merciful to his beast—a matter too often forgotten in our way of business."

"Why, Master Trumbull," replied Job, "you know that when we are chased it's no time to shorten sail, and so the boys do ride whip and spur——" He stopped in his speech, observing the old man had vanished through the door by which he had entered—"That's always the way with old Turnpenny," he said to Fairford; "he cares for nothing of the trade but the profit—now, d—me, if I don't think the fun of it is better worth while. But come along, my fine chap; I must stow you away in safety until it is time to go aboard."

CHAPTER XIV.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

FAIRFORD followed his gruff guide among a labyrinth of barrels and puncheons, on which he had more than once like to have broken his nose, and from thence into what, by the glimpse of the passing lantern upon a desk and writing materials, seemed to be a small office for the despatch of business. Here there appeared no exit, but the smuggler, or smuggler's ally, availing himself of a ladder, removed an old picture, which showed a door about seven feet from the ground, and Fairford, still following Job, was involved in another tortuous and dark passage, which involuntarily reminded him of Peter Peebles's lawsuit. At the end of this labyrinth, when he had little guess where he had been conducted, and was, according to the French phrase, totally *desorienté*, Job suddenly set down the lantern, and availing himself of the flame to light two candles which stood on the table, asked if Alan would choose anything to eat, recommending, at all events, a slug of brandy to keep out the night air. Fairford declined both, but inquired after his baggage.

"The old master will take care of that himself," said Job Rutledge; and drawing back in the direction in which he had entered, he vanished from the farther end of the apartment, by a mode which the candles, still shedding an imperfect light, gave Alan no means of ascertaining. Thus the adventurous young lawyer was left alone in the apartment to which he had been conducted by so singular a passage.

In this condition, it was Alan's first employment to survey, with some accuracy, the place where he was; and accordingly, having trimmed the lights, he walked slowly round the apartment, examining its appearance and dimensions. It seemed to be such a small dining-parlour as is usually found in the house of the better class of artisans, shopkeepers, and such persons, having a recess at the upper end, and the usual furniture of an ordinary description. He found a door, which he endeavoured to open, but it was locked on

outside. A corresponding door on the same side of the apartment admitted him into a closet, upon the front shelves of which were punch-bowls, glasses, tea-cups, and the like, while on one side was hung a horseman's great-coat of the coarsest materials, with two great horse-pistols peeping out of the pocket, and on the floor stood a pair of well-spattered jack-boots, the usual equipment of the time, at least for long journeys.

Not greatly liking the contents of the closet, Alan Fairford shut the door, and resumed his scrutiny round the walls of the apartment, in order to discover the mode of Job Rutledge's retreat. The secret passage was, however, too artificially concealed, and the young lawyer did nothing better to do than to meditate on the singularity of his present situation. He had long known that the excise laws had occasioned an active contraband trade betwixt Scotland and England, which then, as now, existed, and will continue to exist, until the utter abolition of the wretched system which establishes an inequality of taxes betwixt the different parts of the same kingdom; a system, as it said in passing, mightily resembling the conduct of a pugilist, who should tie up one arm that he might fight the better with the other. But Fairford was unprepared for the expensive and regular establishments by which the illicit traffic was carried on, and could not have conceived that the capital employed in it should have been adequate to the erection of these extensive buildings, with all their contrivances for secrecy of communication. He was musing on these circumstances, not without some anxiety for the progress of his own journey, when suddenly, as he lifted his eyes, he discovered old Mr Trumbull at the upper end of the apartment, bearing in one hand a small bundle, in the other his dark lantern, the light of which, as he advanced, he directed full upon Fairford's countenance.

Though such an apparition was exactly what he expected, yet he could not see the grim, stern old man present himself thus suddenly without emotion; especially when he recollected, what to a youth of pious education was peculiarly shocking, that the grizzled hypothesis was probably that instant arisen from his knees to Heaven, for the purpose of engaging in the mysterious transactions of a desperate and illegal trade.

The old man, accustomed to judge with ready sharpness of the physiognomy of those with whom he had business, did not fail to mark something like agitation in Fairford's demeanour. "Have you taken the rue?" said he. "Will ye take the sheaf from the mare, and give up the venture?"

"Never!" said Fairford, firmly, stimulated at once by his natural spirit, and the recollection of his friend; "never, while I have life and strength to follow it out!"

"I have brought you," said Trumbull, "a clean shirt, and some stockings, which is all the baggage you can conveniently carry, and will cause one of the lads lend you a horseman's coat, for it is ill being out riding without one; and, touching your valise, it will be as safe in my poor house, were it full of the gold of Ophir, as if it were in the depth of the mine."

"I have no doubt of it," said Fairford.

"And now," said Trumbull, again, "I pray you to tell me by what name I am to name you to Nanty [which is Antony] Ewart?"

"By the name of Alan Fairford," answered the young lawyer.

"But that," said Mr Trumbull, in reply, "is your own proper name and surname."

"And what other should I give?" said the young man; "do you think I have any occasion for an alias? And, besides, Mr Trumbull, added Alan, thinking a little raillery might intimate confidence of spirit, "you blessed yourself, but a little while since, that you had no acquaintance with those who defiled their names so far as to be obliged to change them."

"True, very true," said Mr Trumbull; "nevertheless, young man, my grey hairs stand unreprieved in this matter; for, in my line of business, when I sit under my vine and my fig-tree, exchanging the strong waters of the north for the gold which is the price thereof, have, I thank Heaven, no disguises to keep with any man, and wear my own name of Thomas Trumbull, without any chance that the same may be polluted. Whereas, thou, who art to journey in many ways, and amongst a strange people, mayst do well to have two names, as thou hast two shirts, the one to keep the other clean."

Here he emitted a chuckling grunt, which lasted for two vibrations of the pendulum exactly, and was the only approach towards laughter in which old Turnpenny, as he was nicknamed, was ever known to indulge.

"You are witty, Mr Trumbull," said Fairford; "but jests are no arguments—I shall keep my own name."

"At your own pleasure," said the merchant; "there is but one name which," &c. &c. &c.

We will not follow the hypocrite through the impious cant which he added, in order to close the subject.

Alan followed him, in silent abhorrence, to the recess in which the beaufet was placed, and which was so artificially made as to conceal another of those traps with which the whole building abounded. This concealment admitted them to the same winding passage by which the young lawyer had been brought thither. The path which they now took amid these mazes differed from the direction in which he had been guided by Rutledge. It led upwards, and terminated beneath a garret window. Trumbull opened it, and with more agility than his age promised, clambered out upon the leads. If Fairford's journey had been hitherto in a stifled and subterranean atmosphere, it was now open, lofty, and airy enough; for he had to follow his guide over leads and slates, which the old smuggler traversed with the dexterity of a cat. It is true, his course was facilitated by knowing exactly where certain stepping-places and holdfasts were placed, of which Fairford could not so readily avail himself; but, after a difficult and somewhat perilous progress along the roofs of two or three houses, they at length descended by a skylight into a garret room, and from thence by the stairs into a public-house; for such it appeared by the ringing of bells, whistling for waiters and attendance, bawling of "House, house, here!" chorus of sea-songs, and the like noises.

Having descended to the second story, and entered a room there, which there was a light, old Mr Trumbull rung the bell of the apartment thrice, with an interval betwixt each, during which he held deliberately the number twenty. Immediately after the third ringing the landlord appeared, with stealthy step, and an appearance of mystery on his buxom visage. He greeted Mr Trumbull, who took his landlord as it proved, with great respect, and expressed some surprise at seeing him so late, as he termed it, "on Saturday e'en."

"And I, Robin Hastie," said the landlord to the tenant, "am more surprised than pleased, to hear sae muckle din in your house, Robie, near the honourable Sabbath; and I must mind you, that it is convening the terms of your tack, whilk stipulates that you should put your public on Saturday at nine o'clock, at latest."

"Yes, sir," said Robin Hastie, no way alarmed at the gravity of the rebuke, "but you must take tent that I have admitted naebody but you, Mr Trumbull (who, by the way, admitted yourself), since nine o'clock; for the most of the folk have been here for several hours about the lading, and so on, of the brig. It is not full tide yet, and I cannot put the men out into the street. If I did, they would go to some other public, and their souls would be none the better, and my purse muckle the waur; for how am I to pay the rent, if I do not sell the liquor?"

"Nay, then," said Thomas Trumbull, "if it is a work of necessity, and in the honest independent way of business, no doubt there is calm in Gilead. But prithee, Robin, wilt thou see if Nanty Ewart, as is most likely, amongst these unhappy toppers; and if so, let him keep this way cannily, and speak to me and this young gentleman. And it's dry talking, Robin—you must minister to us a bowl of punch ye ken my gage."

"From a mutchkin to a gallon, I ken your honour's taste, Mr Thomas Trumbull," said mine host; "and ye shall hang me over the sign-post if there be a drap mair lemon or a curn less sugar than just suits you. There are three of you—you will be for the auld Scots remptory pint-stoup¹ for the success of the voyage?"

"Better pray for it than drink for it, Robin," said Mr Trumbull. "Yours is a dangerous trade, Robin; it hurts mony a ane—baith host and guest. But ye will get the blue bowl, Robin—the blue bowl—that will sloken all their drouth, and prevent the sinful repetition of whipping for an eke of a Saturday at e'en. Ay, Robin, it is pity of Nanty Ewart—Nanty likes the turning up of his little finger unco weel, and we maunna stint him, Robin, so as we leave him sense to steer by."

"Nanty Ewart could steer through the Pentland Firth though he were as drunk as the Baltic Ocean," said Robin Hastie; and instantly slipping down stairs, he speedily returned with the materials for what he called his *browst*, which consisted of two English quarts of spirits,

¹ The Scottish pint of liquid measure comprehends four English measures of the same denomination. The jest is well known of my poor countryman, who, driven to extremity by the raillery of the Southern, on the small denomination of the Scottish pint, at length answered, "Ay, ay! But the deil tak them that has the *least* pint-up."

in a huge blue bowl, with all the ingredients for punch in the same formidable proportion. At the same time he introduced Mr Antony or Nanty Ewart, whose person, although he was a good deal flustered with liquor, was different from what Fairford expected. His dress was what is emphatically termed the shabby genteel—a frock with tarnished lace—a small cocked-hat, ornamented in a similar way—a scarlet waistcoat, with faded embroidery, breeches of the same, with silver knee-bands, and he wore a smart hanger and a pair of pistols in a sullied sword-belt.

"Here I come, patron," he said, shaking hands with Mr Trumbull. "Well, I see you have got some grog aboard."

"It is not my custom, Mr Ewart," said the old gentleman, "as you well know, to become a chamberer or carouser thus late on Saturday at e'en; but I wanted to recommend to your attention a young friend of ours, that is going upon a something particular journey, with a letter to our friend the Laird from Pate-in-Peril, as they call him."

"Ay—indeed?—he must be in high trust for so young a gentleman. I wish you joy, sir," bowing to Fairford. "By'r lady, as Shakespeare says, you are bringing up a neck for a fair end.—Come, patron, we will drink to Mr What-shall-call-um—What is his name?—Did you tell me?—And have I forgot it already?"

"Mr Alan Fairford," said Trumbull.

"Ay, Mr Alan Fairford—a good name for a fair trader—Mr Alan Fairford; and may he be long withheld from the topmost round of ambition, which I take to be the highest round of a certain ladder."

While he spoke, he seized the punch ladle, and began to fill the glasses. But Mr Trumbull arrested his hand, until he had, as he expressed himself, sanctified the liquor by a long grace; during the pronounciation of which he shut indeed his eyes, but his nostrils became dilated, as if he were snuffing up the fragrant beverage with peculiar complacency.

When the grace was at length over, the three friends sat down to their beverage, and invited Alan Fairford to partake. Anxious about his situation, and disgusted as he was with his company, he craved, and with difficulty obtained permission, under the allegation of being fatigued, heated, and the like, to stretch himself on a couch which was in the apartment, and attempted at least to procure some rest before high water, when the vessel was to sail.

He was at length permitted to use his freedom, and stretched himself on the couch, having his eyes for some time fixed on the jovial party he had left, and straining his ears to catch if possible a little of their conversation. This he soon found was to no purpose, for what did actually reach his ears was disguised so completely by the use of cant words, and the thieves-Latin called slang, that even when he caught the words, he found himself as far as ever from the sense of their conversation. At length he fell asleep.

It was after Alan had slumbered for three or four hours that he was wakened by voices bidding him rise up and prepare to be jogging. He started up accordingly, and found himself in presence of the same party of boon companions, who had just despatched their huge

of punch. To Alan's surprise, the liquor had made but little innovation on the brains of men who were accustomed to drink at hours, and in the most inordinate quantities. The landlord indeed spoke a little thick, and the texts of Mr Thomas Trumbull stumbled on his tongue; but Nanty was one of those toppers, who, coming early what *bon vivants* term flustered, remain whole nights and days at the same point of intoxication; and, in fact, as they are seldom entirely sober, can be as rarely seen absolutely drunk. Indeed, Fairford, had he not known how Ewart had been engaged whilst he himself was asleep, would almost have sworn when he awoke, that the man was more sober than when he first entered the room.

He was confirmed in this opinion when they descended below, where two or three sailors and ruffian-looking fellows awaited their commands. Ewart took the whole direction upon himself, gave his orders with briefness and precision, and looked to their being executed with the silence and celerity which that peculiar crisis required. All were now dismissed for the brig, which lay, as Fairford was given to understand, a little farther down the river, which was navigable for vessels of light burden till almost within a mile of the town.

When they issued from the inn the landlord bid them good-by. Mr Trumbull walked a little way with them, but the air had probably considerable effect on the state of his brain; for after reminding Alan Fairford that the next day was the honourable Sabbath, he became extremely excursive in an attempt to exhort him to keep it strictly. At length, being perhaps sensible that he was becoming unintelligible, he thrust a volume into Fairford's hand—hiccuping at the same time—"Good book—good book—fine hymn-book—fit for the honourable Sabbath, whilk awaits us to-morrow morning."—where the iron tongue of time told five from the town steeple of noon, to the farther confusion of Mr Trumbull's already disordered head. "Ay? Is Sunday come and gone already?—Heaven be praised! Only it is a marvel the afternoon is sae dark for the time of the year—Sabbath has slipped ower quietly, but we have reason to bless ourselfs it has not been altogether misemployed. I heard a deal of the preaching—a cauld moralist, I doubt, served that out—t, eh—the prayer—I mind it as if I had said the words myself."—where he repeated one or two petitions, which were probably a part of his family devotions, before he was summoned forth to what he called the way of business. "I never remember a Sabbath pass so nicely off in my life."—Then he recollected himself a little, and said to Allan, "You may read that book, Mr Fairford, to-morrow, the same, though it be Monday; for, you see, it was Saturday when we were thegither, and now it's Sunday and it's dark night—the Sabbath has slipped clean away through our fingers like water through a sieve, which abideth not; and we have to begin again to-morrow morning, in the weariful, base, mean, earthly employments, whilk are unworthy of an immortal spirit—always excepting the way of business."

Three of the fellows were now returning to the town, and at

Ewart's command they cut short the patriarch's exhortation, by leading him back to his own residence. The rest of the party then proceeded to the brig, which only waited their arrival to get under weigh and drop down the river. Nanty Ewart betook himself to steering the brig, and the very touch of the helm seemed to dispel the remaining influence of the liquor which he had drunk, since, through troublesome and intricate channel, he was able to direct the course of his little vessel with the most perfect accuracy and safety.

Alan Fairford, for some time, availed himself of the clearness of the summer morning to gaze on the dimly-seen shores betwixt which they glided, becoming less and less distinct as they receded from each other, until at length, having adjusted his little bundle by way of pillow, and wrapped around him the great-coat with which old Trumbull had equipped him, he stretched himself on the deck, to try to recover the slumber out of which he had been awakened. Sleep had scarce begun to settle on his eyes ere he found something stirring about his person. With ready presence of mind he recollected his situation, and resolved to show no alarm until the purpose of this became obvious; but he was soon relieved from his anxiety, by finding it was only the result of Nanty's attention to his comfort, who was wrapping around him, as softly as he could, a great boat-cloak in order to defend him from the morning air.

"Thou art but a cockerel," he muttered, "but 'twere pity thou wert knocked off the perch before seeing a little more of the sweet and sour of this world—though, faith, if thou hast the usual luck of it, the best way were to leave thee to the chance of a seasoning fever."

These words, and the awkward courtesy with which the skipper of the little brig tucked the sea-coat round Fairford, gave him a confidence of safety which he had not yet thoroughly possessed. He stretched himself in more security on the hard planks, and was speedily asleep, though his slumbers were feverish and unrefreshing.

It has been elsewhere intimated that Alan Fairford inherited from his mother a delicate constitution, with a tendency to consumption, and, being an only child, with such a cause for apprehension, care to the verge of effeminacy, was taken to preserve him from damp beds, wet feet, and those various emergencies to which the Calendonian boys of much higher birth, but more active habits, are generally accustomed. In man, the spirit sustains the constitutional weakness, as in the winged tribes the feathers bear aloft the body. But there is a bound to these supporting qualities; and as the pinions of the bird must at length grow weary, so the *vis animi* of the human struggler becomes broken down by continued fatigue.

When the voyager was awakened by the light of the sun, now riding high in heaven, he found himself under the influence of an almost intolerable headache, with heat, thirst, shooting across the back and loins, and other symptoms intimating violent cold, accompanied with fever. The manner in which he had passed the preceding day and night, though perhaps it might have been of little consequence to most young men, was to him, delicate in constitution and nurtured with bad and even perilous consequences. He felt this was

the case, yet would fain have combated the symptoms of indisposition, which, indeed, he imputed chiefly to sea-sickness. He sat up on deck, and looked on the scene around, as the little vessel, having borne down the Solway Firth, was beginning, with a favourable northerly breeze, to bear away to the southward, crossing the entrance of the Wampole river, and preparing to double the most northerly point of Cumberland.

But Fairford felt annoyed with deadly sickness, as well as by pain of a distressing and oppressive character; and neither Criffel, rising in majesty on the one hand, nor the distant yet more picturesque outline of Skiddaw and Glaramara upon the other, could attract his attention in the manner in which it was usually fixed by beautiful scenery, and especially that which had in it something new as well as striking. Yet it was not in Alan Fairford's nature to give way to despondence, even when seconded by pain. He had recourse, in the first place, to his pocket; but instead of the little Sallust he had brought with him, that the perusal of a classical author might help him to pass away a heavy hour, he pulled out the supposed hymn-book with which he had been presented a few hours before by that temperate and scrupulous person, Mr Thomas Trumbull, *alias* Turnenny. The volume was bound in sable, and its exterior might have become a psalter. But what was Alan's astonishment to read on the title-page the following words:—"Merry Thoughts for Merry Men; Mother Midnight's Miscellany for the Small Hours;" and turning over the leaves, he was disgusted with profligate tales, and more profligate songs, ornamented with figures corresponding in infamy with the letterpress.

"Good God!" he thought "and did this hoary reprobate summon his family together, and, with such a disgraceful pledge of infamy in his bosom, venture to approach the throne of his Creator? It must be so; the book is bound after the manner of those dedicated to deotional subjects, and doubtless the wretch, in his intoxication, condemned the books he carried with him, as he did the days of the week."—Seized with the disgust with which the young and generous usually regard the vices of advanced life, Alan, having turned the leaves of the book over in hasty disdain, flung it from him, as far as he could, into the sea. He then had recourse to the Sallust, which he had at first sought for in vain. As he opened the book, Nantywart, who had been looking over his shoulder, made his own opinion heard.

"I think now, brother, if you are so much scandalised at a little piece of sculduddery, which, after all, does nobody any harm, you had better have given it to me than have flung into the Solway."

"I hope, sir," answered Fairford, civilly, "you are in the habit of reading better books."

"Faith," answered Nanty, "with help of a little Geneva text, I could read my Sallust as well as you can;" and snatching the book from Alan's hand, he began to read, in the Scottish accent:—" *Igitur ex divitiis juventutem luxuria atque avaritia cum superbiâ invasere: cupere, consumere; sua parvi pendere, aliena cupere; pudorem, pudicitiam, divina atque humana promiscua, nihil*

pensi neque moderati habere.'¹—There is a slap in the face now, for an honest fellow that has been buccaniering! Never could keep a groat of what he got, or hold his fingers from what belonged to another, said you? Fie, fie, friend Crispus, thy morals are as crabbed and austere as thy style—the one has as little mercy as the other has grace. By my soul, it is unhandsome to make personal reflections on an old acquaintance, who seeks a little civil intercourse with you after nine twenty years' separation. On my soul, Master Sallust deserves to float on the Solway better than Mother Midnight herself."

"Perhaps, in some respects, he may merit better usage at our hands," said Alan; "for if he has described vice plainly, it seems to have been for the purpose of rendering it generally abhorred."

"Well," said the seaman, "I have heard of the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, and I daresay the *Sortes Sallustianæ* are as true every tittle. I have consulted honest Crispus on my own account, and have had a cuff for my pains. But now see, I open the book on your behalf, and behold what occurs first to my eye!—Lo you there—'*Catilina . . . omnium flagitiosorum atque facinorosorum circum se habebat.*' And then again—'*Etiā si quis à culpā vacuus in amicitiam ejus inciderat, quotidiano usu par similisque cæteris efficiebatur.*'"² That is what I call plain speaking on the part of the old Roman, Mr Fairford. By the way, that is a capital name for a lawyer."

"Lawyer as I am," said Fairford, "I do not understand your innuendo."

"Nay, then," said Ewart, "I can try it another way, as well as the hypocritical old rascal Turnpenny himself could do. I would have you to know that I am well acquainted with my Bible-book, as well as with my friend Sallust." He then, in a snuffling and canting tone, began to repeat the Scriptural text—"*David therefore departed thence, and went to the cave of Adullam. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves together unto him, and he became a captain over them.*" What think you of that?" he said, suddenly changing his manner. "Have I touched you now, sir?"

"You are as far off as ever," replied Fairford.

"What the devil! and you a repeating frigate between Summer-trees and the Laird! Tell that to the marines—the sailors won't believe it. But you are right to be cautious, since you can't say who are right, who not.—But you look ill; it's but the cold morning air—Will you have a can of flip, or a jorum of hot rumbo?—or will you splice the main-brace"—(showing a spirit-flask)—"Will you have a

¹ The translation of the passage is thus given by Sir Henry Steuart of Allanton:—"The youth, taught to look up to riches as the sovereign good, became apt pupils in the school of Luxury. Rapacity and profusion went hand in hand. Careless of their own fortunes, and eager to possess those of others, shame and remorse, modesty and moderation, every principle gave way."—*Works of Sallust, with Original Essays*, vol. ii. p. 17.

² After enumerating the evil qualities of Catiline's associates, the author adds, "If it happened that any as yet uncontaminated by vice were fatally drawn into his friendship, the effects of intercourse and snares artfully spread, subdued every scruple, and early assimilated them to their conductors."—*Ibidem*, p. 19.

id—or a pipe—or a cigar?—a pinch of snuff, at least, to clear your
sins and sharpen your apprehension?”

Fairford rejected all these friendly propositions.

“Why, then,” continued Ewart, “if you will do nothing for the
ee trade, I must patronise it myself.”

So saying, he took a large glass of brandy.

“A hair of the dog that bit me,” he continued,—“of the dog that
ll worry me one day soon; and yet, and be d—d to me for an
iot, I must always have him at my throat. But, says the old catch”
Here he sung, and sung well—

“ ‘ Let’s drink—let’s drink—while life we have ;
We’ll find but cold drinking, cold drinking in the grave.’ ”

ll this,” he continued, “is no charm against the headache. I wish
had anything that could do you good.—Faith, and we have tea and
ffee aboard! I’ll open a chest or a bag, and let you have some in
instant. You are at the age to like such catlap better than bet-
r stuff.”

Fairford thanked him, and accepted his offer of tea.

Nanty Ewart was soon heard calling about, “Break open yon
est—take out your capful, you bastard of a powder-monkey; we
ay want it again.—No sugar?—all used up for grog, say you?—
nock another loaf to pieces, can’t ye?—and get the kettle boiling,
hell’s baby, in no time at all.”

By dint of these energetic proceedings he was in a short time able
return to the place where his passenger lay sick and exhausted,
th a cup, or rather a canful, of tea; for everything was on a large
ale on board of the *Jumping Jenny*. Alan drank it eagerly, and
th so much appearance of being refreshed that Nanty Ewart swore
e would have some too, and only laced it, as his phrase went, with a
ngle glass of brandy.¹

CHAPTER XV.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

WE left Alan Fairford on the deck of the little smuggling brig, in
at disconsolate situation, when sickness and nausea attack a heated
d fevered frame, and an anxious mind. His share of sea-sickness,
however, was not so great as to engross his sensations entirely, or
together to divert his attention from what was passing around. If
e could not delight in the swiftness and agility with which the
ittle frigate” walked the waves, or amuse himself by noticing the
auty of the sea-views around him, where the distant Skiddaw raised
s brow, as if in defiance of the clouded eminence of Criffel, which
rded it over the Scottish side of the estuary, he had spirits and
mposure enough to pay particular attention to the master of the

¹ See Note T. *Concealments for Theft and Smuggling.*

vessel, on whose character his own safety in all probability was dependent.

Nanty Ewart had now given the helm to one of his people, a bald-pated, grizzled old fellow, whose whole life had been spent in evading the revenue laws, with now and then the relaxation of a few months' imprisonment for deforcing officers, resisting seizures, and the like offences.

Nanty himself sat down by Fairford, helped him to his tea, with such other refreshments as he could think of, and seemed in his way sincerely desirous to make his situation as comfortable as things admitted. Fairford had thus an opportunity to study his countenance and manners more closely.

It was plain, Ewart, though a good seaman, had not been bred upon that element. He was a reasonably good scholar, and seemed fond of showing it, by recurring to the subject of Sallust and Juvenal; while, on the other hand, sea-phrases seldom chequered his conversation. He had been in person what is called a smart little man; but the tropical sun had burnt his originally fair complexion to a dusty red; and the bile which was diffused through his system had stained it with a yellowish black—what ought to have been the white part of his eyes, in particular, had a hue as deep as the topaz. He was very thin, or rather emaciated, and his countenance, though still indicating alertness and activity, showed a constitution exhausted with excessive use of his favourite stimulus.

"I see you look at me hard," said he to Fairford. "Had you been an officer of the d—d customs, my terriers' backs would have been up." He opened his breast, and showed Alan a pair of pistols disposed between his waistcoat and jacket, placing his finger at the same time upon the cock of one of them. "But come, you are an honest fellow, though you're a close one. I daresay you think me a queer customer; but I can tell you, they that see the ship leave harbour know little of the seas she is to sail through. My father, honest old gentleman, never would have thought to see me master of the Jumping Jenny."

Fairford said, it seemed very clear indeed that Mr Ewart's education was far superior to the line he at present occupied.

"Oh, Criffel to Solway Moss!" said the other. "Why, man, I should have been an expounder of the word, with a wig like a snow-wreath, and a stipend like—like—like a hundred pounds a-year, I suppose. I can spend thrice as much as that, though, being such as I am." Here he sung a scrap of an old Northumbrian ditty, mimicking the burr of the natives of that county:—

"Willy Foster's gone to sea,
Siller buckles at his knee;
He'll come back and marry me—
Canny Willy Foster."

"I have no doubt," said Fairford, "your present occupation is more lucrative; but I should have thought the church might have been more——"

He stopped, recollecting that it was not his business to say anything disagreeable.

"More respectable, you mean, I suppose?" said Ewart, with a sneer, and squirting the tobacco juice through his front teeth; then was silent for a moment, and proceeded in a tone of candour which some internal touch of conscience dictated. "And so it would, Mr Fairford—and happier, too, by a thousand degrees—though I have had my pleasures too. But there was my father (God bless the old nan!) a true chip of the old Presbyterian block, walked his parish like a captain on the quarter-deck, and was always ready to do good to rich and poor—Off went the laird's hat to the minister, as fast as the poor man's bonnet. When the eye saw him—Pshaw! what have to do with that now?—Yes, he was, as Virgil hath it, '*Vir sapientia et pietate gravis*.' But he might have been the wiser man, had he kept me at home, when he sent me at nineteen to study Divinity at the head of the highest stair in the Covenant-Close. It was a cursed mistake in the old gentleman. What though Mrs Cantrips of Kittlebasket (for she wrote herself no less) was our cousin five times removed, and took me on that account to board and lodging at six shillings, instead of seven shillings a-week? it was a d—d bad saving, as the case proved. Yet her very dignity might have kept me in order; for she never read a chapter excepting out of a Cambridge Bible, printed by Daniel, and bound in embroidered velvet. I think I see it at this moment! And on Sundays, when we had a quart of wopenny ale, instead of butter-milk, to our porridge, it was always served up in a silver posset-dish. Also she used silver-mounted spectacles, whereas even my father's were cased in mere horn. These things had their impression at first, but we get used to grandeur by degrees. Well, sir!—Gad, I can scarce get on with my story—it ticks in my throat—must take a trifle to wash it down. Well, this dame had a daughter—Jess Cantrips, a black-eyed, bouncing wench—and, as the devil would have it, there was the d—d five-story stair—her foot was never from it, whether I went out or came home from the Divinity Hall. I would have eschewed her, sir—I would, on my soul; for I was as innocent a lad as ever came from Lammermuir; but there was no possibility of escape, retreat, or flight, unless I could have got a pair of wings, or made use of a ladder seven stories high, to scale the window of my attic. It signifies little talking—you may suppose how all this was to end—I would have married the girl, and taken my chance—I would, by Heaven! for she was a pretty girl, and a good girl, till she and I met; but you know the old song, 'Kirk would not let us be.' A gentleman, in my case, would have settled the matter with the Kirk-treasurer for a small sum of money; but the poor stibbler, the penniless dominie, having married his cousin of Kittlebasket, must next have proclaimed her frailty to the whole parish, by mounting the throne of Presbyterian penance, and proving, as Othello says, 'his love a whore,' in face of the whole congregation.

"In this extremity I dared not stay where I was, and so thought to go home to my father. But first I got Jack Hadaway, a lad from

the same parish, and who lived in the same infernal stair, to make some inquiries how the old gentleman had taken the matter. I soon, by way of answer, learned, to the great increase of my comfortable reflections, that the good old man made as much clamour, as if such a thing as a man's eating his wedding-dinner without saying grace had never happened since Adam's time. He did nothing for six days but cry out, 'Ichabod, Ichabod, the glory is departed from my house!' and on the seventh he preached a sermon, in which he enlarged on this incident as illustrative of one of the great occasions for humiliation, and causes of national defection. I hope the course he took comforted himself—I am sure it made me ashamed to show my nose at home. So I went down to Leith, and, exchanging my hoddin-grey coat of my mother's spinning for such a jacket as this, I entered my name at the rendezvous as an able-bodied landsman, and sailed with the tender round to Plymouth, where they were fitting out a squadron for the West Indies. There I was put aboard the Fearnought, Captain Daredevil—among whose crew I soon learned to fear Satan (the terror of my early youth) as little as the toughest Jack on board. I had some qualms at first, but I took the remedy" (tapping the case-bottle) "which I recommend to you, being as good for sickness of the soul as for sickness of the stomach—What! you won't?—very well, I must, then—here is to ye."

"You would, I am afraid, find your education of little use in your new condition?" said Fairford.

"Pardon me, sir," resumed the Captain of the Jumping Jenny; "my handful of Latin, and small pinch of Greek, were as useless as old junk, to be sure; but my reading, writing, and accompting, stood me in good stead, and brought me forward. I might have been schoolmaster—ay, and master, in time; but that valiant liquor, rum, made a conquest of me rather too often, and so, make what sail I could, I always went to leeward. We were four years broiling in that blasted climate, and I came back at last with a little prize-money.—I always had thoughts of putting things to rights in the Covenant-Close, and reconciling myself to my father. I found out Jack Hadaway, who was *Tuptowing* away with a dozen of wretched boys, and a fine string of stories he had ready to regale my ears withal. My father had lectured on what he called 'my falling away,' for seven Sabbaths, when, just as his parishioners began to hope that the course was at an end, he was found dead in his bed on the eighth Sunday morning. Jack Hadaway assured me, that if I wished to atone for my errors, by undergoing the fate of the first martyr, I had only to go to my native village, where the very stones of the street would rise up against me as my father's murderer. Here was a pretty item—well, my tongue clove to my mouth for an hour, and was only able at last to utter the name of Mrs Cantrips. O, this was a new theme for my Job's comforter. My sudden departure—my father's no less sudden death—had prevented the payment of the arrears of my board and lodging—the landlord was a haberdasher, with a heart as rotten as the muslin wares he dealt in. Without respect to her age, or gentle kin, my Lady Kittlebasket was ejected

om her airy habitation—her porridge-pot, silver posset-dish, silver-mounted spectacles, and Daniel's Cambridge Bible, sold, at the Cross of Edinburgh, to the cadie who would bid highest for them, and she herself driven to the workhouse, where she got in with difficulty, but as easily enough lifted out, at the end of the month, as dead as her friends could desire. Merry tidings this to me, who had been the —d" (he paused a moment) "*origo mali*—Gad, I think my commission would sound better in Latin than in English!

"But the best jest was behind—I had just power to stammer out something about Jess—by my faith he *had* an answer! I had taught Jess one trade, and, like a prudent girl, she had found out another for herself; unluckily, they were both contraband, and Jess Cantrips, daughter of the Lady Kittlebasket, had the honour to be transported to the plantations, for street-walking and pocket-picking, about six months before I touched shore."

He changed the bitter tone of affected pleasantry into an attempt to laugh, then drew his swarthy hand across his swarthy eyes, and said in a more natural accent, "Poor Jess!"

There was a pause—until Fairford, pitying the poor man's state of mind, and believing he saw something in him that, but for early error and subsequent profligacy, might have been excellent and noble, helped on the conversation by asking, in a tone of commiseration, how he had been able to endure such a load of calamity.

"Why, very well," answered the seaman; "exceedingly well—like a tight ship in a brisk gale. Let me recollect.—I remember thanking Jack, very composedly, for the interesting and agreeable communication; I then pulled out my canvass pouch, with my hoard of moldores, and taking out two pieces, I bid Jack keep the rest till he came back, as I was for a cruise about Auld Reekie. The poor devil looked anxiously, but I shook him by the hand, and ran down stairs, in such confusion of mind, that, notwithstanding what I had heard, I expected to meet Jess at every turning.

"It was market-day, and the usual number of rogues and fools were assembled at the Cross. I observed everybody looked strange on me, and I thought some laughed. I fancy I had been making queer faces enough, and perhaps talking to myself. When I saw myself used in this manner, I held out my clenched fists straight before me, stooped my head, and, like a ram when he makes his race, darted off right down the street, scattering groups of weather-eaten lairds and periwigged burgesses, and bearing down all before me. I heard the cry of 'Seize the madman!' echoed, in Celtic sounds, from the City Guard, with 'Ceaze ta matman!'—but pursuit and opposition were in vain. I pursued my career; the smell of the sea, I suppose, led me to Leith, where, soon after, I found myself walking very quietly, on the shore, admiring the tough round and bound cordage of the vessels, and thinking how a loop, with a man at the end of one of them, would look, by way of tassel.

"I was opposite to the rendezvous, formerly my place of refuge—when I bolted—found one or two old acquaintances, made half-a-dozen new ones—drank for two days—was put aboard the tender—off to Portsmouth—then landed at the Haslaar hospital in a fine hissing-

hot fever. Never mind—I got better—nothing can kill me. The West Indies were my lot again, for since I did not go where I deserved in the next world, I had something as like such quarters as can be had in this—black devils for inhabitants—flames and earthquakes, and so forth, for your element. Well, brother, something or other I did or said—I can't tell what—How the devil should I, when I was as drunk as David's sow, you know?—But I was punished, my lad—made to kiss the wench that never speaks but when she scolds, and that's the gunner's daughter, comrade. Yes, the minister's son of—no matter where—has the cat's scratch on his back! This roused me, and when we were ashore with the boat, I gave three inches of the dirk, after a stout tussle, to the fellow I blamed most, and so took the bush for it. There were plenty of wild lads then along shore; and I don't care who knows—I went on the account, look you—sailed under the black flag and marrow-bones—was a good friend to the sea, and an enemy to all that sailed on it."

Fairford, though uneasy in his mind at finding himself, a lawyer, so close to a character so lawless, thought it best, nevertheless, to put a good face on the matter, and asked Mr Ewart, with as much unconcern as he could assume, "whether he was fortunate as a rover?"

"No, no—d—n it, no!" replied Nanty; "the devil a crumb of butter was ever churned that would stick upon my bread. There was no order among us—he that was captain to-day was swabber to-morrow; and as for plunder—they say old Avery, and one or two close hunks, made money; but in my time all went as it came; and reason good—for if a fellow had saved five dollars, his throat would have been cut in his hammock. And then it was a cruel, bloody work—Pah!—We'll say no more about it. I broke with them at last, for what they did on board of a bit of a snow—no matter what it was—bad enough, since it frightened me. I took French leave, and came in upon the proclamation, so I am free of all that business. And here I sit, the skipper of the Jumping Jenny—a nutshell of a thing, but goes through the water like a dolphin. If it were not for yon hypocritical scoundrel at Annan, who has the best end of the profit, and takes none of the risk, I should be well enough—as well as I want to be. Here is no lack of my best friend,"—touching his case-bottle;—"but, to tell you a secret, he and I have got so used to each other, I begin to think he is like a professed joker, that makes your sides sore with laughing, if you see him but now and then; but if you take up house with him, he can only make your head stupid. But I warrant the old fellow is doing the best he can for me, after all."

"And what may that be?" said Fairford.

"He is KILLING me," replied Nanty Ewart; "and I am only sorry he is so long about it."

So saying, he jumped on his feet, and, tripping up and down the deck, gave his orders with his usual clearness and decision, notwithstanding the considerable quantity of spirits which he had contrived to swallow while recounting his history.

Although far from feeling well, Fairford endeavoured to rouse himself and walk to the head of the brig, to enjoy the beautiful pros-

et, as well as to take some note of the course which the vessel held. To his great surprise, instead of standing across to the opposite shore from which she had departed, the brig was going down the Firth, and apparently steering into the Irish Sea. He called to Nanty Ewart, and expressed his surprise at the course they were pursuing, and asked why they did not stand straight across the firth for some port in Cumberland.

"Why, this is what I call a reasonable question, now," answered Nanty; "as if a ship could go as straight to its port as a horse to the stable, or a free-trader could sail the Solway as securely as a King's letter! Why, I'll tell ye, brother—if I do not see a smoke on Bowness, that is the village upon the headland yonder, I must stand out to sea for twenty-four hours at least, for we must keep the weather-eyes if there are hawks abroad."

"And if you do see the signal of safety, Master Ewart, what is to be done then?"

"Why then, and in that case, I must keep off till night, and then come on you, with the kegs and the rest of the lumber, ashore at Skinburness."

"And then I am to meet with this same Laird whom I have the letter for?" continued Fairford.

"That," said Ewart, "is thereafter as it may be; the ship has its course—the fair trader has his port; but it is not easy to say where the Laird may be found. But he will be within twenty miles of us, for or on, and it will be my business to guide you to him."

Fairford could not withstand the passing impulse of terror which crossed him, when thus reminded that he was so absolutely in the power of a man, who, by his own account, had been a pirate, and who was at present, in all probability, an outlaw as well as a contractor and trader. Nanty Ewart guessed the cause of his involuntary quivering.

"What the devil should I gain," he said, "by passing so poor a card as you are? Have I not had ace of trumps in my hand, and did not play it fairly? Ay, I say the Jumping Jenny can run in other ways as well as kegs. Put *sigma* and *tau* to Ewart, and see how that will spell—D'ye take me now?"

"No, indeed," said Fairford; "I am utterly ignorant of what you allude to."

"Now, by Jove!" said Nanty Ewart, "thou art either the deepest or the shallowest fellow I ever met with—or you are not right after all. I wonder where Summertrees could pick up such a tender long-shore. Will you let me see his letter?"

Fairford did not hesitate to gratify his wish, which, he was aware, he could not easily resist. The master of the Jumping Jenny looked in the direction very attentively, then turned the letter to and fro, and examined each flourish of the pen, as if he were judging of a piece of ornamented manuscript; then handed it back to Fairford, without a single word of remark.

"Am I right now?" said the young lawyer.

"Why, for that matter," answered Nanty, "the letter is right, and the cards are enough; but whether *you* are right or not, is your own business

rather than mine."—And striking upon a flint with the back of knife, he kindled a cigar as thick as his finger, and began to smoo away with great perseverance.

Alan Fairford continued to regard him with a melancholy feeling divided betwixt the interest he took in the unhappy man, and a nunnatural apprehension for the issue of his own adventure.

Ewart, notwithstanding the stupifying nature of his pastime seemed to guess what was working in his passenger's mind; for after they had remained some time engaged in silently observing each other, he suddenly dashed his cigar on the deck, and said to him, "Well, then, if you are sorry for me, I am sorry for you. D—n me, if I have cared a button for man or mother's son, since two years since, when I had another peep of Jack Hadaway. That fellow was got as fat as a Norway whale—married to a great Dutch built quean, that had brought him six children. I believe he did not know me, and thought I was come to rob his house; however, I made up a poor face, and told him who I was. Poor Jack would have given me shelter and clothes, and began to tell me of the moidores that were in bank when I wanted them. Egad, he changed his note when I told him what my life had been, and only wanted to pay me my cash and get rid of me. I never saw so terrified a visage. I burst out a-laughing in his face, told him it was all a humbug, and that the moidores were all his own, henceforth and for ever, and I ran off. I caused one of our people send him a bag of tea and a ke of brandy before I left—poor Jack! I think you are the second person these ten years that has cared a tobacco-stopper for Nanty Ewart."

"Perhaps, Mr Ewart," said Fairford, "you live chiefly with men too deeply interested for their own immediate safety to think much upon the distress of others?"

"And with whom do you yourself consort, I pray?" replied Nanty smartly. "Why, with plotters, that can make no plot to better purpose than their own hanging; and incendiaries, that are snapping the flint upon wet tinder. You'll as soon raise the dead as raise the Highlands—you'll as soon get a grunt from a dead sow as any comfort from Wales or Cheshire. You think because the pot is boiling that no scum but yours can come uppermost. I know better, but —. All these rackets and riots that you think are trending your way have no relation at all to your interest; and the best way to make the whole kingdom friends again at once, would be the alarm of such an undertaking as these mad old fellows are trying to launch into."

"I really am not in such secrets as you seem to allude to," said Fairford; and, determined at the same time to avail himself as far as possible of Nanty's communicative disposition, he added, with a smile, "And if I were, I should not hold it prudent to make them much the subject of conversation. But I am sure so sensible men as Summertrees and the Laird may correspond together without offence to the State."

"I take you, friend—I take you," said Nanty Ewart, upon whom at length, the liquor and tobacco-smoke began to make considerable

ovation. "As to what gentlemen may or may not correspond out, why we may pretermit the question, as the old Professor used say at the Hall; and as to Summertrees, I will say nothing, know him to be an old fox. But I say that this fellow the Laird is a brand in the country; that he is stirring up all the honest fellows to should be drinking their brandy quietly, by telling them stories out their ancestors and the forty-five; and that he is trying to turn waters into his own mill-dam, and to set his sails to all winds. And because the London people are roaring about for some pinches their own, he thinks to win them to his turn with a wet finger. And he gets encouragement from some, because they want a spell money from him; and from others, because they fought for the use once, and are ashamed to go back; and others, because they've nothing to lose; and others, because they are discontented. But if he has brought you, or any one—I say not whom—to this scrape, with the hope of doing any good, he's a d—d decoy-duck, and that's all I can say for him; and you are geese, which is worse than being decoy-ducks, or lame ducks either. And so here to the prosperity of King George the Third, and the true Presbyterian religion, and confusion to the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender!—I'll tell you what, Mr Fairbairn, I am but tenth owner of a bit of a craft, the Jumping Jenny—but tenth owner—and must follow her by my owners' directions. But if I were whole owner, I could not have the brig be made a ferry-boat for your jacobitical, old-fashioned Popish riff-raff, Mr Fairport—I would not, by my soul! They should walk the plank, by the gods, as I have seen better men when I sailed under the what-d'ye-callum colours. But being contraband goods, and on board my vessel, and I with my sailing-guns in my hand, why, I am to forward them as directed.—I say, John Roberts, keep her up a bit with the helm.—And so, Mr Fairbairn, what I do is—as the d—d villain Turnpenny says—all in the way of business."

He had been speaking with difficulty for the last five minutes, and now at length dropped on the deck, fairly silenced by the quantity of spirits which he had swallowed, but without having showed any remorse of the gaiety, or even of the extravagance of intoxication.

The old sailor stepped forward and flung a sea-cloak over the member's shoulders, and added, looking at Fairford, "Pity of him should have this fault; for without it he would have been as good a fellow as ever trode a plank with ox leather."

"And what are we to do now?" said Fairford.

"Stand off and on, to be sure, till we see the signal, and then obey orders."

So saying, the old man turned to his duty, and left the passenger to amuse himself with his own meditations. Presently afterward a light column of smoke was seen rising from the little headland.

"I can tell you what we are to do now, master," said the sailor. "We'll stand out to sea, and then run in again with the evening tide, and make Skinburness; or, if there's not light, we can run into the Ampool river, and put you ashore about Kirkbride or Leaths, with the long-boat."

Fairford, unwell before, felt this destination condemned him to an agony of many hours, which his disordered stomach and aching head were ill able to endure. There was no remedy, however, but patience, and the recollection that he was suffering in the cause of friendship. As the sun rose high he became worse; his sense of smell appeared to acquire a morbid degree of acuteness, for the mere purpose of inhaling and distinguishing all the various odours with which he was surrounded, from that of pitch, to all the complicated smells of the hold. His heart, too, throbbed under the heat, and he felt as if in full progress towards a high fever.

The seamen, who were civil and attentive, considering their calling, observed his distress, and one contrived to make an awning out of an old sail, while another compounded some lemonade, the only liquor which their passenger could be prevailed upon to touch. After drinking it off, he obtained, but could not be said to enjoy, a few hours of troubled slumber.

CHAPTER XVI.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

ALAN FAIRFORD'S spirit was more ready to encounter labour than his frame was adequate to support it. In spite of his exertions, when he awoke, after five or six hours' slumber, he found that he was so much disabled by dizziness in his head and pains in his limbs that he could not raise himself without assistance. He heard with some pleasure that they were now running right for the Wampool river and that he would be put on shore in a very short time. The vessel accordingly lay to, and presently showed a weft in her ensign, which was hastily answered by signals from on shore. Men and horse were seen to come down the broken path which leads to the shore, the latter all properly tackled for carrying their loading. Twenty fishing-barks were pushed afloat at once, and crowded round the brig with much clamour, laughter, cursing, and jesting. Amidst all this apparent confusion there was the essential regularity. Nant Ewart again walked his quarterdeck as if he had never tasted spirit in his life, issued the necessary orders with precision, and saw them executed with punctuality. In half an hour the loading of the brig was in a great measure disposed in the boats; in a quarter of an hour more it was landed on the beach, and another interval of about the same duration was sufficient to distribute it on the various strings of packhorses which waited for that purpose, and which instantly dispersed, each on its own proper adventure. More mystery was observed in loading the ship's boat with a quantity of small barrels which seemed to contain ammunition. This was not done until the commercial customers had been dismissed; and it was not until this was performed that Ewart proposed to Alan, as he lay stunned with pain and noise, to accompany him ashore.

was with difficulty that Fairford could get over the side of the vessel, and he could not seat himself on the stern of the boat without assistance from the captain and his people. Nanty Ewart, who saw nothing in this worse than an ordinary fit of sea-sickness, applied the usual topics of consolation. He assured his passenger that he would get quite well by-and-by, when he had been half an hour on terra firma, and that he hoped to drink a can and smoke a pipe with him and Father Crackenthorp's, for all that he felt a little out of the way riding the wooden horse.

"Who is Father Crackenthorp?" said Fairford, though scarcely able to articulate the question.

"As honest a fellow as is of a thousand," answered Nanty. "Ah, how much good brandy he and I have made little of in our day! By my soul, Mr Fairbird, he is the prince of skinkers, and the father of free trade—not a stingy hypocritical devil like old Turnpenny the flint, that drinks drunk on other folk's cost, and thinks it sin when he has to pay for it—but a real hearty old cock;—the sharks have been at and about him this many a day, but Father Crackenthorp knows how to trim his sails—never a warrant but he hears of before the ink's dry. He is *bonus socius* with headborough and constable. The King's Exchequer could not bribe a man to inform against him. If any such rascal were to cast up, why, he would miss his ears next morning, or be sent to seek them in the Solway. He is a statesman,¹ though he keeps a public; but, indeed, that is only for convenience, and to excuse his having cellarage and folk about him; his wife's a canny woman—and his daughter Doll too. Gad, they'll be in port there till you get round again; and I'll keep my hand with you, and bring you to speech of the Laird. Gad, the only thing I shall have is to get you out of the house; for Doll is a rare girl, and my dame a funny old one, and Father Crackenthorp the best companion! He'll drink you a bottle of rum or brandy without starting, but never wet his lips with the nasty Scottish stuff that the canting old scoundrel Turnpenny has brought into fashion. He is a gentleman, every inch of him, old Crackenthorp; in his own way, he is; and besides, he has a share in the Jumping Jenny, and many a moonlight outfit besides. He can give Doll a pretty penny, if he is the tight fellow that would turn in with her for life."

In the midst of this prolonged panegyric on Father Crackenthorp, the boat touched the beach, the rowers backed their oars to keep her steady, whilst the other fellows jumped into the surf, and with the most rapid dexterity began to hand the barrels ashore.

"Up with them higher on the beach, my hearties," exclaimed Nanty Ewart—"High and dry—high and dry—this gear will not get wetting. Now, out with our spare hand here—high and dry with him too. What's that?—the galloping of horse! Oh, I hear the jingle of the packsaddles—they are our own folk."

By this time all the boat's load was ashore, consisting of the little barrels; and the boat's crew, standing to their arms, ranged themselves in front, waiting the advance of the horses which came clatter-

¹ A small landed proprietor.

ing along the beach. A man, overgrown with corpulence, who might be distinguished in the moonlight, panting with his own exertions, appeared at the head of the cavalcade, which consisted of horses linked together, and accommodated with packsaddles, and chains for securing the kegs, which made a dreadful clattering.

"How now, Father Crackenthorp?" said Ewart—"Why this hurry with your horses? We mean to stay a night with you, and taste your old brandy, and my dame's home-brewed. The signal is up, man, and all is right."

"All is wrong, Captain Nanty," cried the man to whom he spoke "and you are the lad that is like to find it so, unless you bundle off—there are new brooms bought at Carlisle yesterday to sweep the country of you and the like of you—so you were better be jogging inland."

"How many rogues are the officers?—If not more than ten, I will make fight."

"The devil you will!" answered Crackenthorp. "You were better not, for they have the bloody-backed dragoons from Carlisle with them."

"Nay, then," said Nanty, "we must make sail.—Come, Master Fairlord, you must mount and ride.—He does not hear me—he has fainted, I believe—What the devil shall I do?—Father Crackenthorp, I must leave this young fellow with you till the gale blows out—hark ye—goes between the Laird and the t'other old one; he can neither ride nor walk—I must send him up to you."

"Send him up to the gallows!" said Crackenthorp; "there is Quartermaster Thwacker, with twenty men, up yonder; and he had not some kindness for Doll, I had never got hither for a start—but you must get off, or they will be here to seek us, for his orders are woundy particular; and these kegs contain worse than whisky—a hanging matter, I take it."

"I wish they were at the bottom of Wampool river, with them they belong to," said Nanty Ewart. "But they are part of cargo; and what to do with the poor young fellow——"

"Why, many a better fellow has roughed it on the grass with a cloak o'er him," said Crackenthorp. "If he hath a fever, nothing is so cooling as the night air."

"Yes, he would be cold enough in the morning, no doubt; but it's a kind heart, and shall not cool so soon, if I can help it," answered the Captain of the Jumping Jenny.

"Well, Captain, an ye will risk your own neck for another man's, why not take him to the old girls at Fairladies?"

"What! the Miss Arthurets!—The Papist jades!—But never mind; it will do—I have known them take in a whole sloop's crew that were stranded on the sands."

"You may run some risk, though, by turning up to Fairladies; for I tell you they are all up through the country."

"Never mind—I may chance to put some of them down again," said Nanty, cheerfully.—"Come lads, bustle to your tackle. Are you all loaded?"

"Ay, ay, Captain; we will be ready in a jiffy," answered the gang.

D—n your Captains!—Have you a mind to have me hanged if I taken?—All's hail-fellow, here."

A sup at parting," said Father Crackenthorp, extending a flask Nanty Ewart.

Not the twentieth part of a drop," said Nanty. "No Dutch rage for me—my heart is always high enough when there's a nce of fighting; besides, if I live drunk, I should like to die sober. Here, old Jephson—you are the best-natured brute amongst them et the lad between us on a quiet horse, and we will keep him ight, I warrant."

As they raised Fairford from the ground he groaned heavily, and ed faintly where they were taking him to.

To a place where you will be as snug and quiet as a mouse in his e," said Nanty, "if so be that we can get you there safely.—Good-Father Crackenthorp—poison the quartermaster, if you can."

The loaded horses then sprang forward at a hard trot, following h other in a line, and every second horse being mounted by a at fellow in a smock-frock, which served to conceal the arms with ch most of these desperate men were provided. Ewart followed the rear of the line, and, with the occasional assistance of old hson, kept his young charge erect in the saddle. He groaned vily from time to time; and Ewart, more moved with compassion his situation than might have been expected from his own habits, eavoured to amuse him and comfort him, by some account of the ce to which they were conveying him—his words of consolation g, however, frequently interrupted by the necessity of calling to people, and many of them being lost amongst the rattling of the rels, and clinking of the tackle and small chains by which they secured on such occasions.

And you see, brother, you will be in safe quarters at Fairladies ood old scrambling house—good old-maids enough, if they were Papists.—Hollo, you Jack Lowther; keep the line, can't ye, and t your rattle-trap, you broth of a —? And so, being of a good ily, and having enough, the old lasses have turned a kind of saints, d nuns, and so forth. The place they live in was some sort of nun-p long ago, as they have them still in Flanders; so folk call them Vestals of Fairladies—that may be, or may not be; and I care whether it be or no.—Blinkinsop, hold your tongue, and be d—d! And so, betwixt great alms and good dinners, they are well thought oy rich and poor, and their trucking with Papists is looked over. ere are plenty of priests, and stout young scholars, and suchlike, out the house—it's a hive of them—More shame that government d dragoons out after a few honest fellows that bring the old men of England a drop of brandy, and let these ragamuffins uggle in as much papistry and—Hark!—was that a whistle?—No, only a plover. You, Jem Collier, keep a look-out ahead—we'll et them at the High Whins, or Brotthole bottom, or nowhere. a furlong ahead, I say, and look sharp.—These Misses Arthurets d the hungry, and clothe the naked, and suchlike acts—which my or father used to say were filthy rags, but he dressed himself out h as many of them as most folk.—D—n that stumbling horse!

Father Crackenthorp should be d—d himself for putting an honest fellow's neck in such jeopardy."

Thus, and with much more to the same purpose, Nanty ran on, increasing, by his well-intended annoyance, the agony of Alan Fairford, who, tormented by a racking pain along the back and loins, which made the rough trot of the horse torture to him, had his aching head still farther rended and split by the hoarse voice of the sailor, close to his ear. Perfectly passive, however, he did not even essay to give any answer; and indeed his own bodily distress was now so great and engrossing, that to think of his situation was impossible, even if he could have mended it by doing so.

Their course was inland, but in what direction Alan had no means of ascertaining. They passed at first over heaths and sandy downs; they crossed more than one brook, or *beck*, as they are called in that country—some of them of considerable depth—and at length reached a cultivated country, divided, according to the English fashion of agriculture, into very small fields or closes, by high banks, overgrown with underwood, and surmounted by hedgerow trees, amongst which winded a number of impracticable and complicated lanes, where the boughs, projecting from the embankments on each side, intercepted the light of the moon, and endangered the safety of the horsemen. But through this labyrinth the experience of the guides conducted them without a blunder, and without even the slackening of their pace. In many places, however, it was impossible for three men to ride abreast; and therefore the burden of supporting Alan Fairford fell alternately to old Jephson and to Nanty; and it was with much difficulty that they could keep him upright in his saddle.

At length, when his powers of sufferance were quite worn out, and he was about to implore them to leave him to his fate in the first cottage or shed—or under a haystack or a hedge—or anywhere, so he was left at ease, Collier, who rode ahead, passed back the word that they were at the avenue to Fairladies—"Was he to turn up?"

Committing the charge of Fairford to Jephson, Nanty dashed up to the head of the troop, and gave his orders—"Who knows the house best?"

"Sam Skelton's a Catholic," said Lowther.

"A d—d bad religion," said Nanty, of whose Presbyterian education a hatred of Popery seemed to be the only remnant. "But I am glad there is one amongst us anyhow. You, Sam, being a Papist, know Fairladies, and the old maidens, I daresay; so do you fall out of the line, and wait here with me; and do you, Collier, carry on to Walinford bottom, then turn down the beck till you come to the old mill, and Goodman Grist the Miller, or old Peel-the-Causeway, will tell you where to stow; but I will be up with you before that."

The string of loaded horses then struck forward at their former pace, while Nanty, with Sam Skelton, waited by the road-side till the rear came up, when Jephson and Fairford joined them, and, to the great relief of the latter, they began to proceed at an easier pace than formerly, suffering the gang to precede them, till the clatter and clang attending their progress began to die away in the dis-

nce. They had not proceeded a pistol-shot from the place where they parted when a short turning brought them in front of an old croudering gateway, whose heavy pinnacles were decorated in the style of the seventeenth century, with clumsy architectural ornaments several of which had fallen down from decay, and lay scattered about, no farther care having been taken than just to remove them out of the direct approach to the avenue. The great stone pillars, glimmering white in the moonlight, had some fanciful resemblance to supernatural apparitions, and the air of neglect all around gave an uncomfortable idea of the habitation to those who passed its avenue.

"There used to be no gate here," said Skelton, finding their way unexpectedly stopped.

"But there is a gate now, and a porter too," said a rough voice from within. "Who be you, and what do you want at this time of night?"

"We want to come to speech of the ladies—of the Misses Arthuret," said Nanty; "and to ask lodging for a sick man."

"There is no speech to be had of the Miss Arthurets at this time of night, and you may carry your sick man to the doctor," answered the fellow from within, gruffly; "for as sure as there is savour in salt, and scent in rosemary, you will get no entrance—put your pipes up and be jogging on."

"Why, Dick Gardener," said Skelton, "be thou then turned porter?"

"What! do you know who I am?" said the domestic, sharply.

"I know you, by your by-word," answered the other. "What! have you forgot little Sam Skelton, and the brock in the barrel?"

"No, I have not forgotten you," answered the acquaintance of Sam Skelton; "but my orders are peremptory to let no one up the avenue this night, and therefore——"

"But we are armed, and will not be kept back," said Nanty. "Hark ye, fellow, were it not better for you to take a guinea and let us in, than to have us break the door first, and thy pate afterwards? for I won't see my comrade die at your door—be assured of that."

"Why, I dunna know," said the fellow; "but what cattle were those that rode by in such hurry?"

"Why, some of our folk from Bowness, Stoniecultrum, and therefore," answered Skelton; "Jack Lowther, and old Jephson, and broad Will Lamplugh, and suchlike."

"Well," said Dick Gardener, "as sure as there is savour in salt, and scent in rosemary, I thought it had been the troopers from Carlisle and Wigton, and the sound brought my heart to my mouth."

"Had thought thou wouldst have known the clatter of a cask from the clash of a broadsword, as well as e'er a quaffer in Cumberland," said Skelton.

"Come, brother, less of your jaw and more of your legs, if you please," said Nanty; "every moment we stay is a moment lost. Go to the ladies, and tell them that Nanty Ewart, of the Jumping Jenny, has brought a young gentleman, charged with letters from Scot-

land, to a certain gentleman of consequence in Cumberland—that the soldiers are out, and the gentleman is very ill, and if he is not received at Fairladies, he must be left either to die at the gate, or to be taken, with all his papers about him, by the redcoats.”

Away ran Dick Gardener with this message, and in a few minutes lights were seen to flit about, which convinced Fairford, who was now, in consequence of the halt, a little restored to self-possession, that they were traversing the front of a tolerably large mansion-house.

“What if thy friend, Dick Gardener, comes not back again?” said Jephson to Skelton.

“Why, then,” said the person addressed, “I shall owe him just such a licking as thou, old Jephson, had from Dan Cooke, and will pay as duly and truly as he did.”

The old man was about to make an angry reply, when his doubts were silenced by the return of Dick Gardener, who announced that Miss Arthuret was coming herself as far as the gateway to speak with them.

Nanty Ewart cursed in a low tone the suspicions of old maids and the churlish scruples of Catholics, that made so many obstacles to helping a fellow-creature, and wished Miss Arthuret a hearty rheumatism or toothache as the reward of her excursion; but the lady presently appeared, to cut short farther grumbling. She was attended by a waiting-maid with a lantern, by means of which she examined the party on the outside as closely as the imperfect light and the spars of the newly-erected gate would permit.

“I am sorry we have disturbed you so late, Madam Arthuret,” said Nanty; “but the case is this——”

“Holy Virgin,” said she, “why do you speak so loud? Pray, are you not the Captain of the Sainte Genevieve?”

“Why, ay, ma’am,” answered Ewart, “they call the brig so at Dunkirk, sure enough; but along shore here they call her the Jumping Jenny.”

“You brought over the holy Father Buonaventure, did you not?”

“Ay, ay, madam, I have brought over enough of them black cattle,” answered Nanty.

“Fie! fie! friend,” said Miss Arthuret; “it is a pity that the saints should commit these good men to a heretic’s care.”

“Why, no more they would, ma’am,” answered Nanty, “could they find a Papish lubber that knew the coast as I do; then I am trusty as steel to owners, and always look after cargo—live lumber, or dead flesh, or spirits, all is one to me; and your Catholics have such d—d large hoods, with pardon, ma’am, that they can sometimes hide two faces under them. But here is a gentleman dying, with letters about him from the Laird of Summertrees to the Laird of the Lochs, as they call him, along Solway, and every minute he lies here is a nail in his coffin.”

“Saint Mary! what shall we do?” said Miss Arthuret; “we must admit him, I think, at all risks.—You, Richard Gardener, help one of these men to carry the gentleman up to the Place; and you, Selby, see him lodged at the end of the long gallery.—You are a heretic,

tain, but I think you are trusty, and I know you have been trusted but if you are imposing on me——”

“Not I, madam—never attempt to impose on ladies of your experience—my practice that way has been all among the young ones. Come, cheerly, Mr Fairford—you will be taken good care of—try walk.”

Alan did so; and, refreshed by his halt, declared himself able to walk to the house with the sole assistance of the gardener.

“Why, that’s hearty. Thank thee, Dick, for lending him thine m,”—and Nanty slipped into his hand the guinea he had promised. “Farewell, then, Mr Fairford, and farewell, Madam Arthuret, for I’ve been too long here.”

So saying, he and his two companions threw themselves on horseback, and went off at a gallop. Yet, even above the clatter of their hoofs did the incorrigible Nanty hollow out the old ballad—

“A lovely lass to a friar came
To confession a-morning early ;—
‘In what, my dear, are you to blame,
Come tell me most sincerely?’
‘Alas! my fault I dare not name—
But my lad he loved me dearly.’”

“Holy Virgin!” exclaimed Miss Seraphina, as the unhallowed sounds reached her ears; “what profane heathens be these men, and what frights and pinches we be put to among them! The saints be good to us, what a night has this been!—the like never seen at Fairladies.—Help me to make fast the gate, Richard, and thou shalt come down again to wait on it, lest there come more unwelcome visitors—Not that you are unwelcome, young gentleman, for it is sufficient that you need such assistance as we can give you, to make you welcome to Fairladies—only, another time would have done as well—but, hem! I daresay it is all for the best. The avenue is one of the smoothest, sir; look to your feet. Richard Gardener could have had it mown and levelled, but he was obliged to go on a pilgrimage to Saint Winifred’s Well, in Wales.”—(Here Dick gave a short dry cough, which, as if he had found it betrayed some interl feeling a little at variance with what the lady said, he converted to a muttered *Sancta Winifreda, ora pro nobis*. Miss Arthuret, meantime, proceeded)—“We never interfere with our servants’ vows or penances, Master Fairford—I know a very worthy father of your name, perhaps a relation—I say, we never interfere with our servants’ vows. Our Lady forbid they should not know some difference between our service and a heretic’s.—Take care, sir, you will fall if you have not a care. Alas! by night and day there are many stumbling-blocks in our paths!”

With more talk to the same purpose, all of which tended to show her charitable, and somewhat silly woman, with a strong inclination to superstitious devotion, Miss Arthuret entertained her new guest, stumbling at every obstacle which the devotion of his guide Richard had left in the path, he at last, by ascending some stone steps decorated on the side with griffins, or some such heraldic anomalies, attained a terrace extending in front of the Place of Fair-

ladies; an old-fashioned gentleman's house of some consequence, with its range of notched gable-ends and narrow windows, relieved by here and there an old turret about the size of a pepper-box. The door was locked, during the brief absence of the mistress; a dim light glimmered through the sashed door of the hall, which opened beneath a huge stone porch, loaded with jessamine and other creepers. All the windows were dark as pitch.

Miss Arthuret tapped at the door. "Sister, sister Angelica."

"Who is there?" was answered from within; "is it you, sister Seraphina?"

"Yes, yes, undo the door; do you not know my voice?"

"No doubt, sister," said Angelica, undoing bolt and bar; "but you know our charge, and the enemy is watchful to surprise us—*incedit sicut leo vorans*, saith the breviary.—Whom have you brought here? Oh, sister, what have you done!"

"It is a young man," said Seraphina, hastening to interrupt her sister's remonstrance, "a relation, I believe, of our worthy Father Fairford; left at the gate by the captain of that blessed vessel the Sainte Genevieve—almost dead—and charged with despatches to——"

She lowered her voice as she mumbled over the last words.

"Nay, then, there is no help," said Angelica; "but it is unlucky."

During this dialogue between the vestals of Fairladies, Dick Gardener deposited his burden in a chair, where the young lady, after a moment of hesitation, expressing a becoming reluctance to touch the hand of a stranger, put her finger and thumb upon Fairford's wrist, and counted his pulse.

"There is fever here, sister," she said; "Richard must call Ambrose, and we must send some of the febrifuge."

Ambrose arrived presently, a plausible and respectable-looking old servant, bred in the family, and who had risen from rank to rank in the Arthuret service, till he was become half-physician, half-almoner, half-butler, and entire governor; that is, when the Father Confessor, who frequently eased him of the toils of government, chanced to be abroad. Under the direction, and with the assistance, of this venerable personage, the unlucky Alan Fairford was conveyed to a decent apartment at the end of a long gallery, and, to his inexpressible relief, consigned to a comfortable bed. He did not attempt to resist the prescription of Mr Ambrose, who not only presented him with the proposed draught, but proceeded so far as to take a considerable quantity of blood from him, by which last operation he probably did his patient much service.

CHAPTER XVII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

ON the next morning, when Fairford awoke, after no very refreshing slumbers, in which were mingled many wild dreams of his father,

and of Darsie Latimer,—of the damsel in the green mantle, and the estals of Fairladies,—of drinking small-beer with Nanty Ewart, and being immersed in the Solway with the Jumping Jenny,—he found himself in no condition to dispute the order of Mr Ambrose, that he could keep his bed, from which, indeed, he could not have raised himself without assistance. He became sensible that his anxiety, and his constant efforts for some days past, had been too much for his health, and that, whatever might be his impatience, he could not proceed in his undertaking until his strength was re-established.

In the meanwhile, no better quarters could have been found for an invalid. The attendants spoke under their breath, and moved only on tiptoe—nothing was done unless *par ordonnance du medecin*—Asculapius reigned paramount in the premises at Fairladies. Once a day the ladies came in great state to wait upon him, and inquire after his health, and it was then that Alan's natural civility, and the thankfulness which he expressed for their timely and charitable assistance, raised him considerably in their esteem. He was on the third day removed to a better apartment than that in which he had been at first accommodated. When he was permitted to drink a glass of wine, it was of the first quality; one of those curious old-fashioned cob-webbed bottles being produced on the occasion, which are only to be found in the crypts of old country-seats, where they may have lain undisturbed for more than half a century.

But however delightful a residence for an invalid, Fairladies, as its present inmate became soon aware, was not so agreeable to a convalescent. When he dragged himself to the window so soon as he could crawl from bed, behold it was closely grated, and commanded no view except of a little paved court. This was nothing remarkable, most old Border-houses having their windows so secured. But then Fairford observed, that whosoever entered or left the room, always locked the door with great care and circumspection; and some proposals which he made to take a walk in the gallery, or even in the garden, were so coldly received, both by the ladies and their prime minister, Mr Ambrose, that he saw plainly such an extension of his privileges as a guest would not be permitted.

Anxious to ascertain whether this excessive hospitality would permit him his proper privilege of free-agency, he announced to this important functionary, with grateful thanks for the care with which he had been attended, his purpose to leave Fairladies next morning, requesting only, as a continuance of the favours with which he had been loaded, the loan of a horse to the next town; and, assuring Mr Ambrose that his gratitude would not be limited by such a trifle, he slipped three guineas into his hand, by way of seconding his proposal. The fingers of that worthy domestic closed as naturally upon the honorarium as if a degree in the learned faculty had given him a right to clutch it; but his answer concerning Alan's proposed departure was at first evasive, and when he was pushed, it amounted to a peremptory assurance that he could not be permitted to depart to-morrow; it was as much as his life was worth, and his ladies would not authorise it.

"I know best what my own life is worth," said Alan; "and I do

not value it in comparison to the business which requires my instant attention."

Receiving still no satisfactory answer from Mr Ambrose, Fairford thought it best to state his resolution to the ladies themselves, in the most measured, respectful, and grateful terms; but still such as expressed a firm determination to depart on the morrow, or next day at farthest. After some attempts to induce him to stay, on the alleged score of health, which were so expressed that he was convinced they were only used to delay his departure, Fairford plainly told them that he was intrusted with despatches of consequence to the gentleman known by the name of Herries, Redgauntlet, and the Laird of the Lochs; and that it was matter of life and death to deliver them early."

"I daresay, Sister Angelica," said the elder Miss Arthuret, "that the gentleman is honest; and if he is really a relation of Father Fairford, we can run no risk."

"Jesu Maria!" exclaimed the younger. "Oh, fie, Sister Seraphina! Fie, fie!—*Vade retro*—get thee behind me!"

"Well, well; but, sister—Sister Angelica—let me speak with you in the gallery."

So out the ladies rustled in their silks and tissues, and it was a good half-hour ere they rustled in again, with importance and awe on their countenances.

"To tell you the truth, Mr Fairford, the cause of our desire to delay you is—there is a religious gentleman in this house at present——"

"A most excellent person, indeed," said the sister Angelica.

"An anointed of his Master!" echoed Seraphina,—“and we should be glad that, for conscience' sake, you would hold some discourse with him before your departure.”

"Oho!" thought Fairford, "the murder is out—here is a design of conversion!—I must not affront the good old ladies, but I shall soon send off the priest, I think."—He then answered aloud, "that he should be happy to converse with any friend of theirs—that in religious matters he had the greatest respect for every modification of Christianity, though, he must say, his belief was made up to that in which he had been educated; nevertheless, if his seeing the religious person they recommended could in the least show his respect——"

"It is not quite that," said Sister Seraphina, "although I am sure the day is too short to hear him—Father Buonaventure, I mean—speak upon the concerns of our souls; but——"

"Come, come, Sister Seraphina," said the younger, "it is needless to talk so much about it. His—his Eminence—I mean Father Buonaventure—will himself explain what he wants this gentleman to know."

"His Eminence!" said Fairford, surprised—"Is this gentleman so high in the Catholic Church?—The title is given only to Cardinals, I think."

"He is not a Cardinal as yet," answered Seraphina; "but I assure you, Mr Fairford, he is as high in rank as he is eminently endowed with good gifts, and——"

"Come away," said Sister Angelica. "Holy Virgin, how you talk!—What has Mr Fairford to do with Father Buonavente's rank?—Only, sir, you will remember that the Father has been always accustomed to be treated with the most profound deference; deed——"

"Come away, sister," said Sister Seraphina, in her turn; "who looks now, I pray you? Mr Fairford will know how to comport himself."

"And we had best both leave the room," said the younger lady, "for here his Eminence comes."

She lowered her voice to a whisper as she pronounced the last words; and as Fairford was about to reply, by assuring her that any friend of hers should be treated by him with all the ceremony she could expect, she imposed silence on him, by holding up her finger.

A solemn and stately step was now heard in the gallery; it might have proclaimed the approach not merely of a bishop or cardinal, but of the Sovereign Pontiff himself. Nor could the sound have been more respectfully listened to by the two ladies, had it announced that the Head of the Church was approaching in person. They drew themselves, like sentinels on duty, one on each side of the door by which the long gallery communicated with Fairford's apartment, and stood there immovable, and with countenances expressive of the deepest reverence.

The approach of Father Buonavente was so slow, that Fairford had time to notice all this, and to marvel in his mind what wily and ambitious priest could have contrived to subject his worthy but simple-minded hostesses to such superstitious trammels. Father Buonavente's entrance and appearance in some degree accounted for the whole.

He was a man of middle life, about forty, or upwards; but either care, or fatigue, or indulgence, had brought on the appearance of premature old age, and given to his fine features a cast of seriousness or even sadness. A noble countenance, however, still remained; and though his complexion was altered, and wrinkles stamped upon his brow in many a melancholy fold, still the lofty forehead, the full and well-opened eye, and the well-formed nose, showed how handsome in better days he must have been. He was tall, but lost the advantage of his height by stooping; and the cane which he wore always in his hand, and occasionally used, as well as his slow though majestic gait, seemed to intimate that his form and limbs felt already some touch of infirmity. The colour of his hair could not be discovered, as, according to the fashion, he wore a periwig. He was handsomely, though gravely dressed in a secular habit, and had a cockade in his hat; circumstances which did not surprise Fairford, who knew that a military disguise was very often assumed by the seminary priests, whose visits to England, or residence there, subjected them to legal penalties.

As this stately person entered the apartment, the two ladies facing forward, like soldiers on their post when about to salute a superior officer, dropped on either hand of the Father a curtsy so profound,

that the hoop petticoats which performed the feat seemed to sink down to the very floor—nay, through it, as if a trap-door had opened for the descent of the dames who performed this act of reverence.

The Father seemed accustomed to such homage, profound as it was; he turned his person a little way first towards one sister, and then towards the other, while, with a gracious inclination of his person, which certainly did not amount to a bow, he acknowledged their courtesy. But he passed forward without addressing them, and seemed by doing so to intimate that their presence in the apartment was unnecessary.

They accordingly glided out of the room, retreating backwards, with hands clasped and eyes cast upwards, as if imploring blessings on the religious man whom they venerated so highly. The door of the apartment was shut after them, but not before Fairford had perceived that there were one or two men in the gallery, and that, contrary to what he had before observed, the door, though shut, was not locked on the outside.

“Can the good souls apprehend danger from me to this god of their idolatry?” thought Fairford. But he had no time to make farther observations, for the stranger had already reached the middle of his apartment.

Fairford rose to receive him respectfully, but as he fixed his eyes on the visitor, he thought that the Father avoided his looks. His reasons for remaining incognito were cogent enough to account for this, and Fairford hastened to relieve him, by looking downwards in his turn; but when again he raised his face, he found the broad light eye of the stranger so fixed on him, that he was almost put out of countenance by the steadiness of his gaze. During this time they remained standing.

“Take your seat, sir,” said the Father; “you have been an invalid.”

He spoke with the tone of one who desires an inferior to be seated in his presence, and his voice was full and melodious.

Fairford, somewhat surprised to find himself overawed by the airs of superiority, which could be only properly exercised towards one over whom religion gave the speaker influence, sat down at his bidding, as if moved by springs, and was at a loss how to assert the footing of equality on which he felt that they ought to stand. The stranger kept the advantage which he had obtained.

“Your name, sir, I am informed, is Fairford?” said the Father.

Alan answered by a bow.

“Called to the Scottish bar,” continued his visitor. “There is, I believe, in the West, a family of birth and rank called Fairford of Fairford.”

Alan thought this a strange observation from a foreign ecclesiastic, as his name intimated Father Buonaventure to be; but only answered he believed there was such a family.

“Do you count kindred with them, Mr Fairford?” continued the inquirer.

“I have not the honour to lay such a claim,” said Fairford. “My father’s industry has raised his family from a low and obscure

uation—I have no hereditary claim to distinction of any kind.—
 “May I ask the cause of these inquiries?”

“You will learn it presently,” said Father Buonaventure, who had
 given a dry and dissatisfied *hem* at the young man’s acknowledging
 plebeian descent. He then motioned to him to be silent, and
 proceeded with his queries.

“Although not of condition, you are, doubtless, by sentiments
 and education, a man of honour and a gentleman?”

“I hope so, sir,” said Alan, colouring with displeasure. “I have
 not been accustomed to have it questioned.”

“Patience, young man,” said the unperturbed querist—“we are
 on serious business, and no idle etiquette must prevent its being
 discussed seriously.—You are probably aware that you speak to a
 person proscribed by the severe and unjust laws of the present
 government?”

“I am aware of the statute 1700, chapter 3,” said Alan, “banish-
 ing from the realm Priests and trafficking Papists, and punishing
 death, on summary conviction, any such person who, being so
 banished, may return. But I have no means of knowing you, sir,
 to be one of those persons; and I think your prudence may
 commend to you to keep your own counsel.”

“It is sufficient, sir; and I have no apprehensions of disagreeable
 consequences from your having seen me in this house,” said the
 priest.

“Assuredly no,” said Alan. “I consider myself as indebted for
 my life to the Mistresses of Fairladies; and it would be a vile
 requital on my part to pry into or make known what I may have
 seen or heard under this hospitable roof. If I were to meet the
 Pretender himself in such a situation, he should, even at the risk of
 a little stretch to my loyalty, be free from any danger from my
 discretion.”

“The Pretender!” said the Priest, with some angry emphasis;
 but immediately softened his tone and added, “No doubt, however,
 that person is a pretender; and some people think his pretensions
 are not ill-founded. But before running into politics, give me leave
 to say, that I am surprised to find a gentleman of your opinions in
 intimate bits of intimacy with Mr Maxwell of Summertrees and Mr Red-
 gauntlet, and the medium of conducting the intercourse betwixt
 them.”

“Pardon me, sir,” replied Alan Fairford; “I do not aspire to the
 honour of being reputed their confidant or go-between. My concern
 with those gentlemen is limited to one matter of business, deeply
 interesting to me, because it concerns the safety—perhaps the life—
 of my dearest friend.”

“Would you have any objection to intrust me with the cause of
 your journey?” said Father Buonaventure. “My advice may be of
 service to you, and my influence with one or both these gentlemen is
 considerable.”

Fairford hesitated a moment, and hastily revolving all circum-
 stances, concluded that he might perhaps receive some advantage
 from propitiating this personage; while, on the other hand, he en-

dangered nothing by communicating to him the occasion of his journey. He, therefore, after stating shortly, that he hoped Mr Buonaventure would render him the same confidence which he required on his part, gave a short account of Darsie Latimer—of the mystery which hung over his family—and of the disaster which had befallen him. Finally, of his own resolution to seek for his friend, and to deliver him, at the peril of his own life.

The Catholic Priest, whose manner it seemed to be to avoid all conversation which did not arise from his own express motion, made no remarks upon what he had heard, but only asked one or two abrupt questions, where Alan's narrative appeared less clear to him; then rising from his seat, he took two turns through the apartment, muttering between his teeth, with emphasis, the word "Madman!" But apparently he was in the habit of keeping all violent emotions under restraint; for he presently addressed Fairford with the most perfect indifference.

"If," said he, "you thought you could do so without breach of confidence, I wish you would have the goodness to show me the letter of Mr Maxwell of Summertrees. I desire to look particularly at the address."

Seeing no cause to decline this extension of his confidence, Alan, without hesitation, put the letter into his hand. Having turned it round as old Trumbull and Nanty Ewart had formerly done, and, like them, having examined the address with much minuteness, he asked whether he had observed these words, pointing to a pencil-writing upon the under side of the letter. Fairford answered in the negative, and, looking at the letter, read with surprise, "*Cave ne literas Bel-lerophontis adferres;*" a caution which coincided so exactly with the Provost's admonition, that he would do well to inspect the letter of which he was bearer, that he was about to spring up and attempt an escape, he knew not wherefore, or from whom.

"Sit still, young man," said the Father, with the same tone of authority which reigned in his whole manner, although mingled with stately courtesy. "You are in no danger—my character shall be a pledge for your safety.—By whom do you suppose these words have been written?"

Fairford could have answered, "By Nanty Ewart," for he remembered seeing that person scribble something with a pencil, although he was not well enough to observe with accuracy where, or upon what. But not knowing what suspicions, or what worse consequences the seaman's interest in his affairs might draw upon him, he judged it best to answer that he knew not the hand.

Father Buonaventure was again silent for a moment or two, which he employed in surveying the letter with the strictest attention, then stepped to the window as if to examine the address and writing of the envelope with the assistance of a stronger light, and Alan Fairford beheld him, with no less amazement than high displeasure, coolly and deliberately break the seal, open the letter, and peruse the contents.

"Stop, sir, hold!" he exclaimed, so soon as his astonishment permitted him to express his resentment in words; "by what right do you dare——"

"Peace, young gentleman," said the Father, repelling him with a wave of his hand; "be assured I do not act without warrant—nothing can pass betwixt Mr Maxwell and Mr Redgauntlet that I am not fully entitled to know."

"It may be so," said Alan, extremely angry; "but though you may be these gentlemen's father confessor, you are not mine; and in breaking the seal of a letter intrusted to my care you have done me——"

"No injury, I assure you," answered the unperturbed priest; "on the contrary, it may be a service."

"I desire no advantage at such a rate, or to be obtained in such a manner," answered Fairford; "restore me the letter instantly, or——"

"As you regard your own safety," said the priest, "forbear all injurious expressions, and all menacing gestures. I am not one who can be threatened or insulted with impunity; and there are enough within hearing to chastise any injury or affront offered to me, in case I may think it unbecoming to protect or avenge myself with my own hand."

In saying this, the Father assumed an air of such fearlessness and calm authority, that the young lawyer, surprised and overawed, forbore, as he had intended, to snatch the letter from his hand, and confined himself to bitter complaints of the impropriety of his conduct, and of the light in which he himself must be placed to Redgauntlet, should he present him a letter with a broken seal.

"That," said Father Buonaventure, "shall be fully cared for. I will myself write to Redgauntlet, and enclose Maxwell's letter, provided always you continue to desire to deliver it, after perusing the contents."

He then restored the letter to Fairford, and, observing that he hesitated to peruse it, said emphatically, "Read it, for it concerns you."

This recommendation, joined to what Provost Crosbie had formerly recommended, and to the warning, which he doubted not that Nanty intended to convey by his classical allusion, decided Fairford's resolution. "If these correspondents," he thought, "are conspiring against my person, I have a right to counterplot them; self-preservation, as well as my friend's safety, require that I should not be too scrupulous."

So thinking, he read the letter, which was in the following words:—

"DEAR RUGGED AND DANGEROUS,

"WILL you never cease meriting your old nickname? You have springed your dottrel, I find, and what is the consequence?—why, that there will be hue and cry after you presently. The bearer is a pert young lawyer, who has brought a formal complaint against you, which, luckily, he has preferred in a friendly court. Yet, favourable as the judge was disposed to be, it was with the utmost difficulty that cousin Jenny and I could keep him to his tackle. He begins to be timid, suspicious, and untractable, and I fear Jenny will soon bend her brows on him in vain. I know not what to advise—the lad who carries this is a good lad—active for his friend—and

I have pledged my honour he shall have no personal ill-usage—Pledged my honour, remark these words, and remember I can be rugged and dangerous as well as my neighbours. But I have not insured him against a short captivity, and as he is a stirring active fellow, I see no remedy but keeping him out of the way till this business of the good Father B—— is safely blown over, which God send it were!—Always thine, even should I be once more

“CRAIG-IN-PERIL.”

“What think you, young man, of the danger you have been about to encounter so willingly?”

“As strangely,” replied Alan Fairford, “as of the extraordinary means which you have been at present pleased to use for the discovery of Mr Maxwell’s purpose.”

“Trouble not yourself to account for my conduct,” said the Father; “I have a warrant for what I do, and fear no responsibility. But tell me what is your present purpose.”

“I should not perhaps name it to you, whose own safety may be implicated.”

“I understand you,” answered the Father; “you would appeal to the existing government?—That can at no rate be permitted—we will rather detain you at Fairladies by compulsion.”

“You will probably,” said Fairford, “first weigh the risk of such a proceeding in a free country.”

“I have incurred more formidable hazard,” said the priest, smiling; “yet I am willing to find a milder expedient. Come; let us bring the matter to a compromise.”—And he assumed a conciliating graciousness of manner, which struck Fairford as being rather too condescending for the occasion; “I presume you will be satisfied to remain here in seclusion for a day or two longer, provided I pass my solemn word to you, that you shall meet with the person whom you seek after—meet with him in perfect safety, and, I trust, in good health, and be afterwards both at liberty to return to Scotland, or dispose of yourselves as each of you may be minded!”

“I respect the *verbum sacerdotis* as much as can reasonably be expected from a Protestant,” answered Fairford; “but methinks you can scarce expect me to repose so much confidence in the word of an unknown person, as is implied in the guarantee which you offer me.”

“I am not accustomed, sir,” said the Father, in a very haughty tone, “to have my word disputed. But,” he added, while the angry hue passed from his cheek, after a moment’s reflection, “you know me not, and ought to be excused. I will repose more confidence in your honour than you seem willing to rest upon mine; and, since we are so situated that one must rely upon the other’s faith, I will cause you to be set presently at liberty, and furnished with the means of delivering your letter as addressed, provided that now, knowing the contents, you think it safe for yourself to execute the commission.”

Alan Fairford paused. “I cannot see,” he at length replied, “how I can proceed with respect to the accomplishment of my sole

purpose, which is the liberation of my friend, without appealing to the law, and obtaining the assistance of a magistrate. If I present this singular letter of Mr Maxwell, with the contents of which I have become so unexpectedly acquainted, I shall only share his captivity."

"And if you apply to a magistrate, young man, you will bring ruin on these hospitable ladies, to whom, in all human probability, you owe your life. You cannot obtain a warrant for your purpose, without giving a clear detail of all the late scenes through which you have passed. A magistrate would oblige you to give a complete account of yourself before arming you with his authority against a third party; and in giving such an account, the safety of these ladies will necessarily be compromised. A hundred spies have had, and still have, their eyes upon this mansion; but God will protect his own."—He crossed himself devoutly, and then proceeded:—"You can take an hour to think of your best plan, and I will pledge myself to forward it thus far, provided it be not asking you to rely more on my word than your prudence can warrant. You shall go to Redgauntlet,—I name him plainly, to show my confidence in you,—and you shall deliver him this letter of Mr Maxwell's, with one from me, in which I will enjoin him to set your friend at liberty, or at least to make no attempts upon your own person, either by detention or otherwise. If you can trust me thus far," he said, with a proud emphasis on the words, "I will on my side see you depart from this place with the most perfect confidence that you will not return armed with powers to drag its inmates to destruction. You are young and inexperienced—bred to a profession also which sharpens suspicion, and gives false views of human nature. I have seen much of the world, and have known better than most men how far mutual confidence is requisite in managing affairs of consequence."

He spoke with an air of superiority, even of authority, by which Fairford, notwithstanding his own internal struggles, was silenced and overawed so much, that it was not till the father had turned to leave the apartment that he found words to ask him what the consequences would be, should he decline to depart on the terms proposed.

"You must then, for the safety of all parties, remain for some days an inhabitant of Fairladies, where we have the means of detaining you, which self-preservation will in that case compel us to make use of. Your captivity will be short; for matters cannot long remain as they are—The cloud must soon rise, or it must sink upon us for ever.—*Benedicite!*"

With these words he left the apartment.

Fairford, upon his departure, felt himself much at a loss what course to pursue. His line of education, as well as his father's tenets in matters of church and state, had taught him a holy horror for Papists, and a devout belief in whatever had been said of the punie faith of Jesuits, and of the expedients of mental reservation, by which the Catholic priests in general were supposed to evade keeping faith with heretics. Yet there was something of majesty, de-

pressed, indeed, and overclouded, but still grand and imposing, in the manner and words of Father Buonaventure, which it was difficult to reconcile with those preconceived opinions which imputed subtlety and fraud to his sect and order. Above all, Alan was aware that if he accepted not his freedom upon the terms offered him, he was likely to be detained by force; so that, in every point of view, he was a gainer by accepting them.

A qualm, indeed, came across him, when he considered, as a lawyer, that this Father was probably, in the eye of law, a traitor; and that there was an ugly crime on the Statute Book, called Misprision of Treason. On the other hand, whatever he might think or suspect, he could not take upon him to say that the man was a priest, whom he had never seen in the dress of his order, or in the act of celebrating mass; so that he felt himself at liberty to doubt of that, respecting which he possessed no legal proof. He therefore arrived at the conclusion, that he would do well to accept his liberty, and proceed to Redgauntlet under the guarantee of Father Buonaventure, which he scarce doubted would be sufficient to save him from personal inconvenience. Should he once obtain speech of that gentleman, he felt the same confidence as formerly, that he might be able to convince him of the rashness of his conduct, should he not consent to liberate Darsie Latimer. At all events, he should learn where his friend was, and how circumstanced.

Having thus made up his mind, Alan waited anxiously for the expiration of the hour which had been allowed him for deliberation. He was not kept on the tenter-hooks of impatience an instant longer than the appointed moment arrived, for, even as the clock struck, Ambrose appeared at the door of the gallery, and made a sign that Alan should follow him. He did so, and after passing through some of the intricate avenues common in old houses, was ushered into a small apartment, commodiously fitted up, in which he found Father Buonaventure reclining on a couch, in the attitude of a man exhausted by fatigue or indisposition. On a small table beside him, a silver embossed salver sustained a Catholic book of prayer, a small flask of medicine, a cordial, and a little tea-cup of old china. Ambrose did not enter the room—he only bowed profoundly, and closed the door with the least possible noise, so soon as Fairford had entered.

“Sit down, young man,” said the Father, with the same air of condescension which had before surprised, and rather offended Fairford. “You have been ill, and I know too well by my own case that indisposition requires indulgence.—Have you,” he continued, so soon as he saw him seated, “resolved to remain, or to depart?”

“To depart,” said Alan, “under the agreement that you will guarantee my safety with the extraordinary person who has conducted himself in such a lawless manner toward my friend, Darsie Latimer.”

“Do not judge hastily, young man,” replied the Father. “Redgauntlet has the claims of a guardian over his ward, in respect to the young gentleman, and a right to dictate his place of residence, although he may have been injudicious in selecting the means by which he thinks to enforce his authority.”

"His situation as an attainted person abrogates such rights," said Fairford, hastily.

"Surely," replied the priest, smiling at the young lawyer's readiness; "in the eye of those who acknowledge the justice of the attainder—but that do not I. However, sir, here is the guarantee—look at its contents, and do not again carry the letters of Uriah."

Fairford read these words:—

"GOOD FRIEND,

"We send you hither a young man desirous to know the situation of your ward, since he came under your paternal authority, and hopeful of dealing with you for having your relative put at large. This we recommend to your prudence, highly disapproving, at the same time, of any force or coercion, when such can be avoided, and wishing, therefore, that the bearer's negotiation may be successful. At all rates, however, the bearer hath our pledged word for his safety and freedom, which, therefore, you are to see strictly observed, as you value our honour and your own. We farther wish to converse with you, with as small loss of time as may be, having matters of the utmost confidence to impart. For this purpose we desire you to repair hither with all haste, and thereupon we bid you heartily farewell.

"P. B."

"You will understand, sir," said the Father, when he saw that Alan had perused his letter, "that, by accepting charge of this missive, you bind yourself to try the effect of it before having recourse to any legal means, as you term them, for your friend's release."

"There are a few ciphers added to this letter," said Fairford, when he had perused the paper attentively,—“may I inquire what their import is?”

"They respect my own affairs," answered the Father, briefly; "and have no concern whatever with yours."

"It seems to me, however," replied Alan, "natural to suppose——"

"Nothing must be supposed incompatible with my honour," replied the priest, interrupting him; "when such as I am confer favours, we expect that they shall be accepted with gratitude, or declined with thankful respect—not questioned or discussed."

"I will accept your letter, then," said Fairford, after a minute's consideration, "and the thanks you expect shall be most liberally paid, if the result answer what you teach me to expect."

"God only commands the issue," said Father Buonaventure. "Man uses means.—You understand that, by accepting this commission, you engage yourself in honour to try the effect of my letter upon Mr Redgauntlet, before you have recourse to informations or legal warrants?"

"I hold myself bound, as a man of good faith and honour, to do so," said Fairford.

"Well, I trust you," said the Father. "I will now tell you, that an express, despatched by me last night, has, I hear, brought Red-

gauntlet to a spot many miles nearer this place, where he will not find it safe to attempt any violence on your friend, should he be rash enough to follow the advice of Mr Maxwell of Summertrees rather than my commands. We now understand each other."

He extended his hand towards Alan, who was about to pledge his faith in the usual form by grasping it with his own, when the Father drew back hastily. Ere Alan had time to comment upon this repulse, a small side-door, covered with tapestry, was opened; the hangings were drawn aside, and a lady, as if by sudden apparition, glided into the apartment. It was neither of the Misses Arthuret, but a woman in the prime of life, and in the full-blown expansion of female beauty, tall, fair, and commanding in her aspect. Her locks of paly gold, were taught to fall over a brow which, with the stately glance of the large, open, blue eyes, might have become Juno herself; her neck and bosom were admirably formed, and of a dazzling whiteness. She was rather inclined to *embonpoint*, but not more than became her age, of apparently thirty years. Her step was that of a queen, but it was of Queen Vashti, not Queen Esther—the bold and commanding, not the retiring beauty.

Father Buonaventure raised himself on the couch, angrily, as displeased by this intrusion. "How now, madam," he said, with some sternness; "why have we the honour of your company?"

"Because it is my pleasure," answered the lady, composedly.

"Your pleasure, madam!" he repeated, in the same angry tone.

"My pleasure, sir," she continued, "which always keeps exact pace with my duty. I had heard you were unwell—let me hope it is only business which produces this seclusion."

"I am well," he replied; "perfectly well, and I thank you for your care—but we are not alone, and this young man——"

"That young man?" she said, bending her large and serious eyes on Alan Fairford, as if she had been for the first time aware of his presence,—“may I ask who he is?"

"Another time, madam; you shall learn his history after he is gone. His presence renders it impossible for me to explain farther."

"After he is gone may be too late," said the lady; "and what of his presence to me, when your safety is at stake? He is the heretic lawyer whom those silly fools, the Arthurets, admitted into this house at a time when they should have let their own father knock at the door in vain, though the night had been a wild one. You will not surely dismiss him?"

"Your own impatience can alone make that step perilous," said the Father; "I have resolved to take it—do not let your indiscreet zeal, however excellent its motive, add any unnecessary risk to the transaction."

"Even so?" said the lady, in a tone of reproach, yet mingled with respect and apprehension. "And thus you will still go forward, like a stag upon the hunter's snares, with undoubting confidence, after all that has happened?"

"Peace, madam," said Father Buonaventure, rising up; "be silent or quit the apartment; my designs do not admit of female criticism

To this peremptory command the lady seemed about to make a sharp reply; but she checked herself, and pressing her lips strongly together, as if to secure the words from bursting from them, which were already formed upon her tongue, she made a deep reverence, partly as it seemed in reproach, partly in respect, and left the room as suddenly as she had entered it.

The Father looked disturbed at this incident, which he seemed sensible could not but fill Fairford's imagination with an additional throng of bewildering suspicions; he bit his lip and muttered something to himself as he walked through the apartment; then suddenly turned to his visitor with a smile of much sweetness, and a countenance in which every rougher expression was exchanged for those of courtesy and kindness.

"The visit we have been just honoured with, my young friend, has given you," he said, "more secrets to keep than I would have wished you burdened with. The lady is a person of condition—of rank and fortune—but nevertheless is so circumstanced, that the mere fact of her being known to be in this country would occasion many evils. I should wish you to observe secrecy on this subject, even to Redgauntlet or Maxwell, however much I trust them in all that concerns my own affairs."

"I can have no occasion," replied Fairford, "for holding any discussion with these gentlemen, or with any others, on the circumstance which I have just witnessed—it could only have become the subject of my conversation by mere accident, and I will now take care to avoid the subject entirely."

"You will do well, sir, and I thank you," said the Father, throwing much dignity into the expression of obligation which he meant to convey. "The time may perhaps come when you will learn what it is to have obliged one of my condition. As to the lady, she has the highest merit, and nothing can be said of her justly which would not redound to her praise. Nevertheless—in short, sir, we wander at present as in a morning mist—the sun will, I trust, soon rise and dispel it, when all that now seems mysterious will be fully revealed—or it will sink into rain," he added, in a solemn tone, "and then explanation will be of little consequence—Adieu, sir; I wish you well."

He made a graceful obeisance, and vanished through the same side-door by which the lady had entered; and Alan thought he heard their voices high in dispute in the adjoining apartment.

Presently afterwards, Ambrose entered, and told him that a horse and guide waited him beneath the terrace.

"The good Father Buonaventure," added the butler, "has been graciously pleased to consider your situation, and desired me to inquire whether you have any occasion for a supply of money?"

"Make my respects to his reverence," answered Fairford, "and assure him I am provided in that particular. I beg you also to make my acknowledgments to the Misses Arthuret, and assure them that their kind hospitality, to which I probably owe my life, shall be remembered with gratitude as long as that life lasts. You yourself, Mr Ambrose, must accept of my kindest thanks for your skill and attention."

Mid these acknowledgments they left the house, descended the terrace, and reached the spot where the gardener, Fairford's old acquaintance, waited for him, mounted upon one horse and leading another.

Bidding adieu to Ambrose, our young lawyer mounted, and rode down the avenue, often looking back to the melancholy and neglected dwelling in which he had witnessed such strange scenes, and musing upon the character of its mysterious inmates, especially the noble and almost regal seeming priest, and the beautiful but capricious dame, who, if she was really Father Buonaventure's penitent, seemed less docile to the authority of the Church, than, as Alan conceived, the Catholic discipline permitted. He could not, indeed, help being sensible that the whole deportment of these persons differed much from his preconceived notions of a priest and devotee. Father Buonaventure, in particular, had more natural dignity and less art and affectation in his manner, than accorded with the idea which Calvinists were taught to entertain of that wily and formidable person, a Jesuitical missionary.

While reflecting on these things, he looked back so frequently at the house, that Dick Gardener, a forward, talkative fellow, who began to tire of silence, at length said to him, "I think you will know Fairladies when you see it again, sir?"

"I daresay I shall, Richard," answered Fairford, good-humouredly. "I wish I knew as well where I am to go next. But you can tell me, perhaps?"

"Your worship should know better than I," said Dick Gardener; "nevertheless, I have a notion you are going where all you Scotsmen should be sent, whether you will or no."

"Not to the devil, I hope, good Dick?" said Fairford.

"Why, no. That is a road which you may travel as heretics; but as Scotsmen, I would only send you three-fourths of the way—and that is back to Scotland again—always craving your honour's pardon."

"Does our journey lie that way?" said Fairford.

"As far as the water-side," said Richard. "I am to carry you to old Father Crackenthorp's, and then you are within a spit and a stride of Scotland, as the saying is. But mayhap you may think twice of going thither, for all that; for Old England is fat feeding-ground for north-country cattle."

CHAPTER XVIII.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER.

OUR history must now, as the old romancers wont to say, "leave to tell" of the quest of Alan Fairford, and instruct our readers of the adventures which befell Darsie Latimer, left as he was in the precarious custody of his self-named tutor, the Laird of the Lochs of

Solway, to whose arbitrary pleasure he found it necessary for the present to conform himself.

In consequence of this prudent resolution, and although he did not assume such a disguise without some sensations of shame and degradation, Darsie permitted Cristal Nixon to place over his face, and secure by a string, one of those silk masks which ladies frequently wore to preserve their complexions, when exposed to the air during long journeys on horseback. He remonstrated somewhat more vehemently against the long riding-skirt, which converted his person from the waist into the female guise, but was obliged to concede this point also.

The metamorphosis was then complete; for the fair reader must be informed, that in those rude times, the ladies, when they honoured the masculine dress by assuming any part of it, wore just such hats, coats, and waistcoats, as the male animals themselves made use of, and had no notion of the elegant compromise betwixt male and female attire, which has now acquired, *par excellence*, the name of a *habit*. Trolloping things our mothers must have looked, with long square-cut coats, lacking collars, and with waistcoats plentifully supplied with a length of pocket, which hung far downwards from the middle. But then they had some advantage from the splendid colours, lace, and gay embroidery, which masculine attire then exhibited; and, as happens in many similar instances, the finery of the materials made amends for the want of symmetry and grace of form in the garments themselves. But this is a digression.

In the court of the old mansion, half manor-place, half farm-house, or rather a decayed manor-house converted into an abode for a Cumberland tenant, stood several saddled horses. Four or five of them were mounted by servants or inferior retainers, all of whom were well armed with sword, pistol, and carabine. But two had riding furniture for the use of females—the one being accoutred with a side-saddle, the other with a pillion attached to the saddle.

Darsie's heart beat quicker within him; he easily comprehended that one of these was intended for his own use; and his hopes suggested that the other was designed for that of the fair Green-Mantle, whom, according to his established practice, he had adopted for the queen of his affections, although his opportunities of holding communication with her had not exceeded the length of a silent supper on one occasion, and the going down a country-dance on another. This, however, was no unwonted mood of passion with Darsie Latimer, upon whom Cupid was used to triumph only in the degree of a Mahratta conqueror, who overruns a province with the rapidity of lightning, but finds it impossible to retain it beyond a very brief space. Yet this new love was rather more serious than the scarce skinned-up wounds which his friend Fairford used to ridicule. The damsel had shown a sincere interest in his behalf; and the air of mystery with which that interest was veiled, gave her, to his lively imagination, the character of a benevolent and protecting spirit, as much as that of a beautiful female.

At former times the romance attending his short-lived attachments had been of his own creating, and had disappeared as soon as

ever he approached more closely to the object with which he had invested it. On the present occasion it really flowed from external circumstances, which might have interested less susceptible feelings, and an imagination less lively than that of Darsie Latimer, young, inexperienced, and enthusiastic as he was.

He watched, therefore, anxiously to whose service the palfrey bearing the lady's saddle was destined. But ere any female appeared to occupy it, he was himself summoned to take his seat on the pillion behind Cristal Nixon, amid the grins of his old acquaintance Jan, who helped him to horse, and the unrestrained laughter of Cicely, who displayed on the occasion a case of teeth which might have rivalled ivory.

Latimer was at an age when being an object of general ridicule, even to clowns and milkmaids, was not a matter of indifference, and he longed heartily to have laid his horsewhip across Jan's shoulders. That, however, was a solacement of his feelings which was not at the moment to be thought of; and Cristal Nixon presently put an end to his unpleasant situation by ordering the riders to go on. He himself kept the centre of the troop, two men riding before and two behind him, always, as it seemed to Darsie, having their eye upon him, to prevent any attempt to escape. He could see from time to time, when the straight line of the road, or the advantage of an ascent permitted him, that another troop of three or four riders followed them at about a quarter of a mile's distance, amongst whom he could discover the tall form of Redgauntlet, and the powerful action of his gallant black horse. He had little doubt that Green-Mantle made one of the party, though he was unable to distinguish her from the others.

In this manner they travelled from six in the morning until nearly ten of the clock, without Darsie exchanging a word with any one; for he loathed the very idea of entering into conversation with Cristal Nixon, against whom he seemed to feel an instinctive aversion; nor was that domestic's saturnine and sullen disposition such as to have encouraged advances, had he thought of making them.

At length the party halted for the purpose of refreshment; but as they had hitherto avoided all villages and inhabited places upon their route, so they now stopped at one of those large ruinous Dutch barns, which are sometimes found in the fields, at a distance from the farmhouses to which they belong. Yet in this desolate place some preparations had been made for their reception. There were, in the end of the barn, racks filled with provender for the horses, and plenty of provisions for the party were drawn from the trusses of straw, under which the baskets that contained them had been deposited. The choicest of these were selected and arranged apart by Cristal Nixon, while the men of the party threw themselves upon the rest, which he abandoned to their discretion. In a few minutes afterwards the rearward party arrived and dismounted, and Redgauntlet himself entered the barn with the green-mantled maiden by his side. He presented her to Darsie with these words:—

“It is time you two should know each other better. I promised you my confidence, Darsie, and the time is come for reposing it. But

first we will have our breakfast; and then, when once more in the saddle, I will tell you that which it is necessary that you should know. Salute Liliás, Darsie."

The command was sudden, and surprised Latimer, whose confusion was increased by the perfect ease and frankness with which Liliás offered at once her cheek and her hand, and pressing his as she rather took it than gave her own, said very frankly, "Dearest Darsie, how rejoiced I am that our uncle has at last permitted us to become acquainted!"

Darsie's head turned round, and it was perhaps well that Redgauntlet called on him to sit down, as even that movement served to hide his confusion. There is an old song which says—

——— "when ladies are willing,
A man can but look like a fool;"

and on the same principle, Darsie Latimer's looks at this unexpected frankness of reception would have formed an admirable vignette for illustrating the passage. "Dearest Darsie," and such a ready, nay, eager salute of lip and hand!—It was all very gracious, no doubt—and ought to have been received with much gratitude; but constituted as our friend's temper was, nothing could be more inconsistent with his tone of feeling. If a hermit had proposed to him to club for a pot of beer, the illusion of his reverend sanctity could not have been dispelled more effectually than the divine qualities of Green-Mantle faded upon the ill-imagined frank-heartedness of poor Liliás. Vexed with her forwardness, and affronted at having once more cheated himself, Darsie could hardly help muttering two lines of the song we have already quoted:

"The fruit that must fall without shaking,
Is rather too mellow for me."

And yet it was pity for her too—she was a very pretty young woman—his fancy had scarcely overrated her in that respect—and the slight derangement of the beautiful brown locks which escaped in natural ringlets from under her riding-hat, with the bloom which exercise had brought into her cheek, made her even more than usually fascinating. Redgauntlet modified the sternness of his look when it was turned towards her, and in addressing her, used a softer tone than his usual deep bass. Even the grim features of Cristal Nixon relaxed when he attended on her, and it was then, if ever, that his misanthropical visage expressed some sympathy with the rest of humanity.

"How can she," thought Latimer, "look so like an angel, yet be so mere a mortal after all?—How could so much seeming modesty have so much forwardness of manner, when she ought to have been most reserved? How can her conduct be reconciled to the grace and ease of her general deportment?"

The confusion of thoughts which occupied Darsie's imagination gave to his looks a disordered appearance, and his inattention to the food which was placed before him, together with his silence and absence of mind, induced Liliás solicitously to inquire, whether he

did not feel some return of the disorder under which he had suffered so lately. This led Mr Redgauntlet, who seemed also lost in his own contemplations, to raise his eyes, and join in the same inquiry with some appearance of interest. Latimer explained to both that he was perfectly well.

"It is well it is so," answered Redgauntlet; "for we have that before us which will brook no delay from indisposition—we have not, as Hotspur says, leisure to be sick."

Lilias, on her part, endeavoured to prevail upon Darsie to partake of the food which she offered him, with a kindly and affectionate courtesy, corresponding to the warmth of the interest she had displayed at their meeting; but so very natural, innocent, and pure in its character, that it would have been impossible for the vainest coxcomb to have mistaken it for coquetry, or a desire of captivating a prize so valuable as his affection. Darsie, with no more than the reasonable share of self-opinion common to most youths when they approach twenty-one, knew not how to explain her conduct.

Sometimes he was tempted to think that his own merits had, even during the short intervals when they had seen each other, secured such a hold of the affections of a young person, who had probably been bred up in ignorance of the world and its forms, that she was unable to conceal her partiality. Sometimes he suspected that she acted by her guardian's order, who, aware that he, Darsie, was entitled to a considerable fortune, might have taken this bold stroke to bring about a marriage betwixt him and so near a relative.

But neither of these suppositions was applicable to the character of the parties. Miss Lilias's manners, however soft and natural, displayed in their ease and versatility considerable acquaintance with the habits of the world, and in the few words she said during the morning repast, there were mingled a shrewdness and good sense, which could scarce belong to a miss capable of playing the silly part of a love-smitten maiden so broadly. As for Redgauntlet, with his stately bearing, his fatal frown, his eye of threat and of command, it was impossible, Darsie thought, to suspect him of a scheme having private advantage for its object;—he could as soon have imagined Cassius picking Cæsar's pocket, instead of drawing his poniard on the Dictator.

While he thus mused, unable either to eat, drink, or answer to the courtesy of Lilias, she soon ceased to speak to him, and sat silent as himself.

They had remained nearly an hour in their halting-place, when Redgauntlet said aloud, "Look out, Cristal Nixon. If we hear nothing from Fairladies, we must continue our journey."

Cristal went to the door, and presently returned and said to his master in a voice as harsh as his features, "Gilbert Gregson is coming, his horse as white with foam as if a fiend had ridden him."

Redgauntlet threw from him the plate on which he had been eating, and hastened towards the door of the barn, which the courier at that moment entered; a smart jockey with a black velvet hunting-cap, and a broad belt drawn tight round his waist, to which was secured his express-bag. The variety of mud with which he was

splashed from cap to spur, showed he had had a rough and rapid ride. He delivered a letter to Mr Redgauntlet, with an obeisance, and then retired to the end of the barn, where the other attendants were sitting or lying upon the straw, in order to get some refreshment.

Redgauntlet broke the letter open with haste, and read it with anxious and discomposed looks. On a second perusal, his displeasure seemed to increase, his brow darkened, and was distinctly marked with the fatal sign peculiar to his family and house. Darsie had never before observed his frown bear such a close resemblance to the shape which tradition assigned it.

Redgauntlet held out the open letter with one hand, and struck it with the forefinger of the other, as, in a suppressed and displeased tone, he said to Cristal Nixon, "Countermanded—ordered northward once more!—Northward, when all our hopes lie to the south—a second Derby direction, when we turned our back on glory, and marched in quest of ruin!"

Cristal Nixon took the letter and ran it over, then returned it to his master with the cold observation, "A female influence predominates."

"But it shall predominate no longer," said Redgauntlet; "it shall wane as ours rises in the horizon. Meanwhile, I will on before—and you, Cristal will bring the party to the place assigned in the letter. You may now permit the young persons to have unreserved communication together; only mark that you watch the young man closely enough to prevent his escape, if he should be idiot enough to attempt it, but not approaching so close as to watch their free conversation."

"I care nought about their conversation," said Nixon, surlily.

"You hear my commands, Liliass," said the Laird, turning to the young lady. "You may use my permission and authority, to explain so much of our family matters as you yourself know. At our next meeting I will complete the task of disclosure, and I trust I shall restore one Redgauntlet more to the bosom of our ancient family. Let Latimer, as he calls himself, have a horse to himself; he must for some time retain his disguise.—My horse—my horse!"

In two minutes they heard him ride off from the door of the barn, followed at speed by two of the armed men of his party.

The commands of Cristal Nixon, in the meanwhile, put all the remainder of the party in motion, but the Laird himself was long out of sight ere they were in readiness to resume their journey. When at length they set out, Darsie was accommodated with a horse and side-saddle, instead of being obliged to resume his place on the pillion behind the detestable Nixon. He was obliged, however, to retain his riding-skirt, and to reassume his mask. Yet, notwithstanding this disagreeable circumstance, and although he observed that they gave him the heaviest and slowest horse of the party, and that, as a farther precaution against escape, he was closely watched on every side, yet riding in company with the pretty Liliass was an advantage which overbalanced these inconveniences.

It is true, that this society, to which that very morning he would

have looked forward as a glimpse of heaven, had, now that it was thus unexpectedly indulged, something much less rapturous than he had expected.

It was in vain that, in order to avail himself of a situation so favourable for indulging his romantic disposition, he endeavoured to coax back, if I may so express myself, that delightful dream of ardent and tender passion; he felt only such a confusion of ideas at the difference between the being whom he had imagined, and her with whom he was now in contact, that it seemed to him like the effect of witchcraft. What most surprised him was, that this sudden flame should have died away so rapidly, notwithstanding that the maiden's personal beauty was even greater than he had expected—her demeanour, unless it should be deemed over-kind towards himself, as graceful and becoming as he could have fancied it, even in his gayest dreams. It were judging hardly of him to suppose that the mere belief of his having attracted her affections more easily than he expected, was the cause of his ungratefully undervaluing a prize too lightly won, or that his transient passion played around his heart with the flitting radiance of a wintry sunbeam flashing against an icicle, which may brighten it for a moment, but cannot melt it. Neither of these was precisely the case, though such fickleness of disposition might also have some influence in the change.

The truth is, perhaps, the lover's pleasure, like that of the hunter, is in the chase; and that the brightest beauty loses half its merit, as the fairest flower its perfume, when the willing hand can reach it too easily. There must be doubt—there must be danger—there must be difficulty; and if, as the poet says, the course of ardent affection never does run smooth, it is perhaps because, without some intervening obstacle, that which is called the romantic passion of love, in its high poetical character and colouring, can hardly have an existence;—any more than there can be a current in a river, without the stream being narrowed by steep banks, or checked by opposing rocks.

Let not those, however, who enter into a union for life without those embarrassments which delight a Darsie Latimer, or a Lydia Languish, and which are perhaps necessary to excite an enthusiastic passion in breasts more firm than theirs, augur worse of their future happiness, because their own alliance is formed under calmer auspices. Mutual esteem, an intimate knowledge of each other's character, seen, as in their case, undisguised by the mists of too partial passion—a suitable proportion of parties in rank and fortune, in taste and pursuits—are more frequently found in a marriage of reason, than in a union of romantic attachment; where the imagination, which probably created the virtues and accomplishments with which it invested the beloved object, is frequently afterwards employed in magnifying the mortifying consequences of its own delusion, and exasperating all the stings of disappointment. Those who follow the banners of Reason are like the well-disciplined battalion, which, wearing a more sober uniform, and making a less dazzling show, than the light troops commanded by Imagination, enjoy more safety, and even more honour, in the conflicts of human life. All this, however, is foreign to our present purpose.

Uncertain in what manner to address her whom he had been lately so anxious to meet with, and embarrassed by a *tête-à-tête* to which his own timid inexperience gave some awkwardness, the party had proceeded more than a hundred yards before Darsie assumed courage to accost, or even to look at, his companion. Sensible, however, of the impropriety of his silence, he turned to speak to her; and observing that, although she wore her mask, there was something like disappointment and dejection in her manner, he was moved by self-reproach for his own coldness, and hastened to address her in the kindest tone he could assume.

"You must think me cruelly deficient in gratitude, Miss Liliass, that I have been thus long in your company, without thanking you for the interest which you have deigned to take in my unfortunate affairs?"

"I am glad you have at length spoken," she said, "though I own it is more coldly than I expected—*Miss Liliass!* *Deign* to take interest!—In whom, dear Darsie, *can* I take interest but in you; and why do you put this barrier of ceremony betwixt us, whom adverse circumstances have already separated for such a length of time?"

Darsie was again confounded at the extra candour, if we may use the term, of this frank avowal—"One must love partridge very well," thought he, "to accept it when thrown in one's face—if this is not plain speaking, there is no such place as downright Dunstable in being!"

Embarrassed with these reflections, and himself of a nature fancifully, almost fastidiously, delicate, he could only in reply stammer forth an acknowledgment of his companion's goodness, and his own gratitude. She answered in a tone partly sorrowful and partly impatient, repeating, with displeased emphasis, the only distinct words he had been able to bring forth—"Goodness—gratitude!—O Darsie! should these be the phrases between you and me?—Alas! I am too sure you are displeased with me, though I cannot even guess on what account. Perhaps you think I have been too free in venturing upon my visit to your friend. But then remember, it was in your behalf, and that I knew no better way to put you on your guard against the misfortunes and restraint which you have been subjected to, and are still enduring."

"Dear lady," said Darsie, rallying his recollection, and suspicious of some error in apprehension,—a suspicion which his mode of address seemed at once to communicate to Liliass, for she interrupted him,—

"*Lady!* dear *lady!*—For whom, or for what, in Heaven's name, do you take me, that you address me so formally?"

Had the question been asked in that enchanted hall in Fairyland, where all interrogations must be answered with absolute sincerity, Darsie had certainly replied, that he took her for the most frank-hearted and ultra-liberal lass that had ever lived since Mother Eve eat the pippin without paring. But as he was still on middle-earth, and free to avail himself of a little polite deceit, he barely answered, that he believed he had the honour of speaking to the niece of Mr Redgauntlet.

"Surely," she replied; "but were it not as easy for you to have said, to your own only sister?"

Darsie started in his saddle, as if he had received a pistol-shot.

"My sister!" he exclaimed.

"And you did *not* know it, then?" said she. "I thought your reception of me was cold and indifferent!"

A kind and cordial embrace took place betwixt the relatives; and so light was Darsie's spirit, that he really felt himself more relieved, by getting quit of the embarrassments of the last half-hour, during which he conceived himself in danger of being persecuted by the attachment of a forward girl, than disappointed by the vanishing of so many day-dreams as he had been in the habit of encouraging during the time when the green-mantled maiden was goddess of his idolatry. He had been already flung from his romantic Pegasus, and was too happy at length to find himself with bones unbroken, though with his back on the ground. He was, besides, with all his whims and follies, a generous, kind-hearted youth, and was delighted to acknowledge so beautiful and amiable a relative, and to assure her in the warmest terms of his immediate affection and future protection, so soon as they should be extricated from their present situation. Smiles and tears mingled on Liliass's cheeks, like showers and sunshine in April weather.

"Out on me," she said, "that I should be so childish as to cry at what makes me so sincerely happy! since, God knows, family-love is what my heart has most longed after, and to which it has been most a stranger. My uncle says that you and I, Darsie, are but half Redgauntlets, and that the metal of which our father's family was made has been softened to effeminacy in our mother's offspring."

"Alas!" said Darsie, "I know so little of our family story, that I almost doubted that I belonged to the House of Redgauntlet, although the chief of the family himself intimated so much to me."

"The Chief of the family!" said Liliass. "You must know little of your own descent, indeed, if you mean my uncle by that expression. You yourself, my dear Darsie, are the heir and representative of our ancient House, for our father was the elder brother—that brave and unhappy Sir Henry Darsie Redgauntlet, who suffered at Carlisle in the year 1746. He took the name of Darsie, in conjunction with his own, from our mother, heiress to a Cumberland family of great wealth and antiquity, of whose large estates you are the undeniable heir, although those of your father have been involved in the general doom of forfeiture. But all this must be necessarily unknown to you."

"Indeed I hear it for the first time in my life," answered Darsie.

"And you knew not that I was your sister?" said Liliass. "No wonder you received me so coldly. What a strange, wild, forward young person you must have thought me—mixing myself in the fortunes of a stranger whom I had only once spoken to—corresponding with him by signs—Good Heaven! what can you have supposed me?"

"And how should I have come to the knowledge of our connec-

tion?" said Darsie. "You are aware I was not acquainted with it when we danced together at Brokenburn."

"I saw that with concern, and fain I would have warned you," answered Liliás; "but I was closely watched, and before I could find or make an opportunity of coming to a full explanation with you on a subject so agitating, I was forced to leave the room. What I did say was, you may remember, a caution to leave the southern border, for I foresaw what has since happened. But since my uncle has had you in his power I never doubted he had communicated to you our whole family history."

"He has left me to learn it from you, Liliás; and assure yourself that I will hear it with more pleasure from your lips than from his. I have no reason to be pleased with his conduct towards me."

"Of that," said Liliás, "you will judge better when you have heard what I have to tell you;" and she began her communication in the following manner.

CHAPTER XIX.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

"THE House of Redgauntlet," said the young lady, "has for centuries been supposed to lie under a doom, which has rendered vain their courage, their talents, their ambition, and their wisdom. Often making a figure in history, they have been ever in the situation of men striving against both wind and tide, who distinguish themselves by their desperate exertions of strength, and their persevering endurance of toil, but without being able to advance themselves upon their course, by either vigour or resolution. They pretend to trace this fatality to a legendary history, which I may tell you at a less busy moment."

Darsie intimated, that he had already heard the tragic story of Sir Alberick Redgauntlet.

"I need only say, then," proceeded Liliás, "that our father and uncle felt the family doom in its full extent. They were both possessed of considerable property, which was largely increased by our father's marriage, and were both devoted to the service of the unhappy House of Stewart; but (as our mother at least supposed) family considerations might have withheld her husband from joining openly in the affair of 1745, had not the high influence which the younger brother possessed over the elder, from his more decided energy of character, hurried him along with himself into that undertaking.

"When, therefore, the enterprise came to the fatal conclusion which bereaved our father of his life, and consigned his brother to exile, Lady Redgauntlet fled from the north of England, determined to break off all communication with her late husband's family, particularly his brother, whom she regarded as having, by their insane political enthusiasm, been the means of his untimely death; and

determined that you, my brother, an infant, and that I, to whom she had just given birth, should be brought up as adherents of the present dynasty. Perhaps she was too hasty in this determination—too timidly anxious to exclude, if possible, from the knowledge of the very spot where we existed, a relation so nearly connected with us as our father's only brother. But you must make allowance for what she had suffered. See, brother," she said, pulling her glove off, "these five blood-specks on my arm are a mark by which mysterious Nature has impressed, on an unborn infant, a record of its father's violent death and its mother's miseries."¹

"You were not, then, born when my father suffered?" said Darsie.

"Alas, no!" she replied; "nor were you a twelvemonth old. It was no wonder that my mother, after going through such scenes of agony, became irresistibly anxious for the sake of her children—of her son in particular; the more especially as the late Sir Henry, her husband, had, by a settlement of his affairs, confided the custody of the persons of her children, as well as the estates which descended to them, independently of those which fell under his forfeiture, to his brother Hugh, in whom he placed unlimited confidence."

"But my mother had no reason to fear the operation of such a deed, conceived in favour of an attainted man," said Darsie.

"True," replied Lilius; "but our uncle's attainder might have been reversed, like that of so many other persons, and our mother, who both feared and hated him, lived in continual terror that this would be the case, and that she should see the author, as she thought him, of her husband's death, come armed with legal powers, and in a capacity to use them, for the purpose of tearing her children from her protection. Besides, she feared, even in his incapacitated condition, the adventurous and pertinacious spirit of her brother-in-law, Hugh Redgauntlet, and felt assured that he would make some attempt to possess himself of the persons of the children. On the other hand, our uncle, whose proud disposition might, perhaps, have been soothed by the offer of her confidence, revolted against the distrustful and suspicious manner in which Lady Darsie Redgauntlet acted towards him. She basely abused, he said, the unhappy circumstances in which he was placed, in order to deprive him of his natural privilege of protecting and educating the infants, whom nature and law, and the will of their father, had committed to his charge, and he swore solemnly he would not submit to such an injury. Report of his threats was made to Lady Redgauntlet, and tended to increase those fears which proved but too well founded. While you and I, children at that time of two or three years old, were playing together in a walled orchard, adjacent to our mother's residence, which she had fixed somewhere in Devonshire, my uncle suddenly scaled the wall with several men, and I was snatched up and carried off to a boat which waited for them. My mother, however, flew to your rescue, and as she seized on and held you fast, my uncle could not, as he has since told me, possess himself of your

¹ See Note U. *Marks upon Unborn Babies.*

person, without using unmanly violence to his brother's widow. Of this he was incapable; and, as people began to assemble upon my mother's screaming, he withdrew, after darting upon you and her one of those fearful looks, which, it is said, remain with our family, as a fatal bequest of Sir Alberick, our ancestor."

"I have some recollection of the scuffle which you mention," said Darsie; "and I think it was my uncle himself (since my uncle he is) who recalled the circumstance to my mind on a late occasion. I can now account for the guarded seclusion under which my poor mother lived—for her frequent tears, her starts of hysterical alarm, and her constant and deep melancholy. Poor lady! what a lot was hers, and what must have been her feelings when it approached to a close!"

"It was then that she adopted," said Liliass, "every precaution her ingenuity could suggest, to keep your very existence concealed from the person whom she feared—nay, from yourself; for she dreaded, as she is said often to have expressed herself, that the wild-fire blood of Redgauntlet would urge you to unite your fortunes to those of your uncle, who was well known still to carry on political intrigues, which most other persons had considered as desperate. It was also possible that he, as well as others, might get his pardon, as government showed every year more lenity towards the remnant of the Jacobites, and then he might claim the custody of your person, as your legal guardian. Either of these events she considered as the direct road to your destruction."

"I wonder she had not claimed the protection of Chancery for me," said Darsie; "or confided me to the care of some powerful friend."

"She was on indifferent terms with her relations, on account of her marriage with our father," said Liliass, "and trusted more to secreting you from your uncle's attempts, than to any protection which law might afford against them. Perhaps she judged unwisely, but surely not unnaturally, for one rendered irritable by so many misfortunes and so many alarms. Samuel Griffiths, an eminent banker, and a worthy clergyman now dead, were, I believe, the only persons whom she intrusted with the execution of her last will; and my uncle believes that she made them both swear to observe profound secrecy concerning your birth and pretensions until you should come to the age of majority, and in the mean time to breed you up in the most private way possible, and that which was most likely to withdraw you from my uncle's observation."

"And I have no doubt," said Darsie, "that betwixt change of name and habitation, they might have succeeded perfectly, but for the accident—lucky or unlucky, I know not which to term it—which brought me to Brokenburn, and into contact with Mr Redgauntlet. I see also why I was warned against England, for in England——"

"In England alone, if I understand rightly," said Miss Redgauntlet, "the claims of your uncle to the custody of your person could have been enforced, in case of his being replaced in the ordinary rights of citizenship, either by the lenity of the government, or by some change in it. In Scotland, where you possess no property,

I understand his authority might have been resisted, and measures taken to put you under the protection of the law. But, pray, think it not unlucky that you have taken the step of visiting Brokenburn—I feel confident that the consequences must be ultimately fortunate, for, have they not already brought us into contact with each other?”

So saying, she held out her hand to her brother, who grasped it with a fondness of pressure very different from the manner in which they first clasped hands that morning. There was a moment's pause, while the hearts of both were overflowing with a feeling of natural affection, to which circumstances had hitherto rendered them strangers.

At length Darsie broke silence; “I am ashamed,” he said, “my dearest Liliias, that I have suffered you to talk so long about matters concerning myself only, while I remain ignorant of your story and your present situation.”

“The former is none of the most interesting, nor the latter the most safe or agreeable,” answered Liliias; “but now, my dearest brother, I shall have the inestimable support of your countenance and affection; and were I but sure that we could weather the formidable crisis which I find so close at hand, I should have little apprehensions for the future.”

“Let me know,” said Darsie, “what our present situation is; and rely upon my utmost exertions both in your defence and my own. For what reason can my uncle desire to detain me a prisoner? If in mere opposition to the will of my mother, she has long been no more; and I see not why he should wish, at so much trouble and risk, to interfere with the free will of one to whom a few months will give a privilege of acting for himself, with which he will have no longer any pretence to interfere.”

“My dearest Arthur,” answered Liliias,—“for that name, as well as Darsie, properly belongs to you—it is the leading feature in my uncle's character, that he has applied every energy of his powerful mind to the service of the exiled family of Stewart. The death of his brother, the dilapidation of his own fortunes, have only added to his hereditary zeal for the House of Stewart a deep and almost personal hatred against the present reigning family. He is, in short, a political enthusiast of the most dangerous character, and proceeds in his agency with as much confidence as if he felt himself the very Atlas, who is alone capable of supporting a sinking cause.”

“And where or how did you, my Liliias, educated, doubtless, under his auspices, learn to have a different view of such subjects?”

“By a singular chance,” replied Liliias, “in the nunnery where my uncle placed me. Although the Abbess was a person exactly after his own heart, my education as a pensioner devolved much on an excellent old mother who had adopted the tenets of the Jansenists, with perhaps a still farther tendency towards the reformed doctrines than those of Porte-Royale. The mysterious secrecy with which she inculcated these tenets gave them charms to my young mind, and I embraced them the rather that they were in direct opposition to the doctrines of the Abbess, whom I hated so much for her severity, that

I felt a childish delight in setting her control at defiance, and contradicting in my secret soul all that I was openly obliged to listen to with reverence. Freedom of religious opinion brings on, I suppose, freedom of political creed; for I had no sooner renounced the Pope's infallibility, than I began to question the doctrine of hereditary and indefeasible right. In short, strange as it may seem, I came out of a Parisian convent, not indeed an instructed Whig and Protestant, but with as much inclination to be so as if I had been bred up, like you, within the presbyterian sound of Saint Giles's chimes."

"More so, perhaps," replied Darsie; "for the nearer the church—the proverb is somewhat musty. But how did these liberal opinions of yours agree with the very opposite prejudices of my uncle?"

"They would have agreed like fire and water," answered Lillas, "had I suffered mine to become visible; but as that would have subjected me to constant reproach and upbraiding, or worse, I took great care to keep my own secret; so that occasional censures for coldness, and lack of zeal for the good cause, were the worst I had to undergo; and these were bad enough."

"I applaud your caution," said Darsie.

"You have reason," replied his sister; "but I got so terrible a specimen of my uncle's determination of character before I had been acquainted with him for much more than a week, that it taught me at what risk I should contradict his humour. I will tell you the circumstances; for it will better teach you to appreciate the romantic and resolved nature of his character than anything which I could state of his rashness and enthusiasm.

"After I had been many a long year at the convent, I was removed from thence, and placed with a meagre old Scottish lady of high rank, the daughter of an unfortunate person, whose head had, in the year 1715, been placed on Temple-Bar. She subsisted on a small pension from the French Court, aided by an occasional gratuity from the Stewarts, to which the annuity paid for my board formed a desirable addition. She was not ill-tempered, nor very covetous—neither beat me nor starved me—but she was so completely trammelled by rank and prejudices, so awfully profound in genealogy, and so bitterly keen, poor lady, in British politics, that I sometimes thought it pity that the Hanoverians, who murdered, as she used to tell me, her poor dear father, had left his dear daughter in the land of the living. Delighted, therefore, was I, when my uncle made his appearance, and abruptly announced his purpose of conveying me to England. My extravagant joy at the idea of leaving Lady Rachel Rougedragon was somewhat qualified by observing the melancholy look, lofty demeanour, and commanding tone of my near relative. He held more communication with me on the journey, however, than consisted with his taciturn demeanour in general, and seemed anxious to ascertain my tone of character, and particularly in point of courage. Now, though I am a tamed Redgauntlet, yet I have still so much of our family spirit as enables me to be as composed in danger as most of my sex; and upon two occasions in the course of our journey—a threatened attack by banditti, and the overturn of our carriage—I had the fortune so to conduct myself as to convey to my

uncle a very favourable idea of my intrepidity. Probably this encouraged him to put in execution the singular scheme which he had in agitation.

"Ere we reached London we changed our means of conveyance, and altered the route by which we approached the city, more than once; then, like a hare which doubles repeatedly at some distance from the seat she means to occupy, and at last leaps into her form from a distance so great as she can clear by a spring, we made a forced march, and landed in private and obscure lodgings in a little old street in Westminster, not far from the Cloisters.

"On the morning of the day on which we arrived, my uncle went abroad, and did not return for some hours. Meantime I had no other amusement than to listen to the tumult of noises which succeeded each other, or reigned in confusion together during the whole morning. Paris I had thought the most noisy capital in the world, but Paris seemed midnight silence compared to London. Cannon thundered near and at a distance—drums, trumpets, and military music of every kind, rolled, flourished, and pierced the clouds, almost without intermission. To fill up the concert, bells pealed incessantly from a hundred steeples. The acclamations of an immense multitude were heard from time to time, like the roaring of a mighty ocean, and all this without my being able to glean the least idea of what was going on, for the windows of our apartment looked upon a waste backyard, which seemed totally deserted. My curiosity became extreme, for I was satisfied, at length, that it must be some festival of the highest order which called forth these incessant sounds.

"My uncle at length returned, and with him a man of an exterior singularly unprepossessing. I need not describe him to you, for—do not look round—he rides behind us at this moment."

"That respectable person, Mr Cristal Nixon, I suppose?" said Darsie.

"The same," answered Lillas. "Make no gesture that may intimate we are speaking of him."

Darsie signified that he understood her, and she pursued her relation.

"They were both in full dress, and my uncle, taking a bundle from Nixon, said to me, 'Lillas, I am come to carry you to see a grand ceremony; put on as hastily as you can the dress you will find in that parcel, and prepare to attend me.' I found a female dress, splendid and elegant, but somewhat bordering upon the antique fashion. It might be that of England, I thought, and I went to my apartment full of curiosity, and dressed myself with all speed.

"My uncle surveyed me with attention. 'She may pass for one of the flower-girls,' he said to Nixon, who only answered with a nod.

"We left the house together; and such was their knowledge of the lanes, courts, and bypaths, that though there was the roar of a multitude in the broad streets, those which we traversed were silent and deserted; and the strollers whom we met, tired of gazing upon gayer figures, scarcely honoured us with a passing look, although, at any other time, we should, among these vulgar suburbs, have attracted a troublesome share of observation. We crossed at length a broad

street, where many soldiers were on guard, while others, exhausted with previous duty, were eating, drinking, smoking, and sleeping beside their piled arms.

“‘One day, Nixon,’ whispered my uncle, ‘we will make these red-coated gentry stand to their muskets more watchfully.’

“‘Or it will be the worse for them,’ answered his attendant, in a voice as unpleasant as his physiognomy.

“Unquestioned and unchallenged by any one, we crossed among the guards, and Nixon tapped thrice at a small postern door in a huge ancient building, which was straight before us. It opened, and we entered without my perceiving by whom we were admitted. A few dark and narrow passages at length conveyed us into an immense Gothic hall, the magnificence of which baffles my powers of description.

“It was illuminated by ten thousand wax lights, whose splendour at first dazzled my eyes, coming as we did from these dark and secret avenues. But when my sight began to become steady, how shall I describe what I beheld? Beneath were huge ranges of tables, occupied by princes and nobles in their robes of state—high officers of the crown, wearing their dresses and badges of authority—reverend prelates and judges, the sages of the church and law, in their more sombre, yet not less awful robes—with others whose antique and striking costume announced their importance, though I could not even guess who they might be. But at length the truth burst on me at once—it was, and the murmurs around confirmed it, the Coronation Feast. At a table above the rest, and extending across the upper end of the hall, sat enthroned the youthful Sovereign himself, surrounded by the princes of the blood, and other dignitaries, and receiving the suit and homage of his subjects. Heralds and pursuivants, blazing in their fantastic yet splendid armorial habits, and pages of honour, gorgeously arrayed in the garb of other days, waited upon the princely banqueters. In the galleries with which this spacious hall was surrounded, shone all, and more than all, that my poor imagination could conceive, of what was brilliant in riches, or captivating in beauty. Countless rows of ladies, whose diamonds, jewels, and splendid attire, were their least powerful charms, looked down from their lofty seats on the rich scene beneath, themselves forming a show as dazzling and as beautiful as that of which they were spectators. Under these galleries, and behind the banqueting-tables, were a multitude of gentlemen, dressed as if to attend a court, but whose garb, although rich enough to have adorned a royal drawing-room, could not distinguish them in such a high scene as this. Amongst these we wandered for a few minutes, undistinguished and unregarded. I saw several young persons dressed as I was, so was under no embarrassment from the singularity of my habit, and only rejoiced, as I hung on my uncle’s arm, at the magical splendour of such a scene, and at his goodness for procuring me the pleasure of beholding it.

“By and by, I perceived that my uncle had acquaintances among those who were under the galleries, and seemed, like ourselves, to be mere spectators of the solemnity. They recognised each other with

a single word, sometimes only with a gripe of the hand—exchanged some private signs, doubtless—and gradually formed a little groupe, in the centre of which we were placed.

“‘Is it not a grand sight, Liliass?’ said my uncle. ‘All the noble, and all the wise, and all the wealthy of Britain, are there assembled.’”

“‘It is indeed,’ said I, ‘all that my mind could have fancied of regal power and splendour.’”

“‘Girl,’ he whispered,—and my uncle can make his whispers as terribly emphatic as his thundering voice or his blighting look—‘all that is noble and worthy in this fair land are there assembled—but it is to bend like slaves and sycophants before the throne of a new usurper.’”

“I looked at him, and the dark hereditary frown of our unhappy ancestor was black upon his brow.

“‘For God’s sake,’ I whispered, ‘consider where we are.’”

“‘Fear nothing,’ he said; ‘we are surrounded by friends.’—As he proceeded, his strong and muscular frame shook with suppressed agitation. ‘See,’ he said, ‘yonder bends Norfolk, renegade to his Catholic faith; there stoops the Bishop of—, traitor to the Church of England; and,—shame of shames! yonder the gigantic form of Errol bows his head before the grandson of his father’s murderer! But a sign shall be seen this night amongst them—*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, shall be read on these walls, as distinctly as the spectral handwriting made them visible on those of Belshazzar!’”

“‘For God’s sake,’ said I, dreadfully alarmed, ‘it is impossible you can meditate violence in such a presence!’”

“‘None is intended, fool,’ he answered; ‘nor can the slightest mischance happen, provided you will rally your boasted courage, and obey my directions. But do it coolly and quickly, for there are a hundred lives at stake.’”

“‘Alas! what can I do?’ I asked in the utmost terror.

“‘Only be prompt to execute my bidding,’ said he; ‘it is but to lift a glove—Here, hold this in your hand—throw the train of your dress over it, be firm, composed, and ready—or, at all events, I step forward myself.’”

“‘If there is no violence designed,’ I said, taking, mechanically the iron glove he put into my hand.

“I could not conceive his meaning; but, in the excited state of mind in which I beheld him, I was convinced that disobedience on my part would lead to some wild explosion. I felt from the emergency of the occasion a sudden presence of mind, and resolved to do anything that might avert violence and bloodshed. I was not long held in suspense. A loud flourish of trumpets, and the voice of heralds, were mixed with the clatter of horses’ hoofs, while a champion, armed at all points, like those I had read of in romance, attended by squires, pages, and the whole retinue of chivalry, pranced forward, mounted upon a barbed steed. His challenge, in defiance of all who dared impeach the title of the new sovereign, was recited aloud—once, and again.

“‘Rush in at the third sounding,’ said my uncle to me; ‘bring me the parader’s gage, and leave mine in lieu of it.’”

"I could not see how this was to be done, as we were surrounded by people on all sides. But, at the third sounding of the trumpets, a lane opened as if by word of command, betwixt me and the champion, and my uncle's voice said, 'Now, Liliass, now!'

"With a swift and yet steady step, and with a presence of mind for which I have never since been able to account, I discharged the perilous commission. I was hardly seen, I believe, as I exchanged the pledges of battle, and in an instant retired. 'Nobly done, my girl!' said my uncle, at whose side I found myself, shrouded as I was before, by the interposition of the bystanders. 'Cover our retreat, gentlemen,' he whispered to those around him.

"Room was made for us to approach the wall, which seemed to open, and we were again involved in the dark passages through which we had formerly passed. In a small anteroom my uncle stopped, and hastily muffling me in a mantle which was lying there, we passed the guards—threaded the labyrinth of empty streets and courts, and reached our retired lodgings without attracting the least attention."

"I have often heard," said Darsie, "that a female, supposed to be a man in disguise,—and yet, Liliass, you do not look very masculine—had taken up the champion's gauntlet at the present King's Coronation, and left in its place a gage of battle, with a paper, offering to accept the combat, provided a fair field should be allowed for it. I have hitherto considered it as an idle tale. I little thought how nearly I was interested in the actors of a scene so daring—How could you have courage to go through with it?"¹

"Had I had leisure for reflection," answered his sister, "I should have refused, from a mixture of principle and of fear. But, like many people who do daring actions, I went on because I had not time to think of retreating. The matter was little known, and it is said the King had commanded that it should not be farther inquired into;—from prudence, as I suppose, and lenity, though my uncle chooses to ascribe the forbearance of the Elector of Hanover, as he calls him, sometimes to pusillanimity, and sometimes to a presumptuous scorn of the faction who opposes his title."

"And have your subsequent agencies under this frantic enthusiast," said Darsie, "equalled this in danger?"

"No—nor in importance," replied Liliass; "though I have witnessed much of the strange and desperate machinations, by which, in spite of every obstacle, and in contempt of every danger, he endeavours to awaken the courage of a broken party. I have traversed, in his company, all England and Scotland, and have visited the most extraordinary and contrasted scenes; now lodging at the castles of the proud gentry of Cheshire and Wales, where the retired aristocrats, with opinions as antiquated as their dwellings and their manners, still continue to nourish jacobitical principles; and the next week, perhaps, spent among outlawed smugglers, or Highland banditti. I have known my uncle often act the part of a hero, and sometimes that of a mere vulgar conspirator, and turn himself, with the most surprising flexibility, into all sorts of shapes to attract proselytes to his cause."

¹ See Note X. *Coronation of George III.*

"Which in the present day," said Darsie, "he finds, I presume, no easy task."

"So difficult," said Lilius, "that, I believe, he has, at different times, disgusted with the total falling away of some friends, and the coldness of others, been almost on the point of resigning his undertaking. How often have I known him affect an open brow and a jovial manner, joining in the games of the gentry, and even in the sports of the common people, in order to invest himself with a temporary degree of popularity; while, in fact, his heart was bursting to witness what he called the degeneracy of the times, the decay of activity among the aged, and the want of zeal in the rising generation. After the day has been spent in the hardest exercise, he has spent the night in pacing his solitary chamber, bewailing the downfall of the cause, and wishing for the bullet of Dundee, or the axe of Balmerino."

"A strange delusion," said Darsie; "and it is wonderful that it does not yield to the force of reality."

"Ah, but," replied Lilius, "realities of late have seemed to flatter his hopes. The general dissatisfaction with the peace—the unpopularity of the minister, which has extended itself even to the person of his master—the various uproars which have disturbed the peace of the metropolis, and a general state of disgust and disaffection, which seems to affect the body of the nation, have given unwonted encouragement to the expiring hopes of the Jacobites, and induced many, both at the Court of Rome, and, if it can be called so, of the Pretender, to lend a more favourable ear than they had hitherto done to the insinuations of those who, like my uncle, hope, when hope is lost to all but themselves. Nay, I really believe that at this moment they meditate some desperate effort. My uncle has been doing all in his power, of late, to conciliate the affections of those wild communities that dwell on the Solway, over whom our family possessed a seigniorial interest before the forfeiture, and amongst whom, on the occasion of 1745, our unhappy father's interest, with his own, raised a considerable body of men. But they are no longer willing to obey his summons; and, as one apology among others, they allege your absence as their natural head and leader. This has increased his desire to obtain possession of your person, and, if he possibly can, to influence your mind, so as to obtain your authority to his proceedings."

"That he shall never obtain," answered Darsie; "my principles and my prudence alike forbid such a step. Besides, it would be totally unavailing to his purpose. Whatever these people may pretend, to evade your uncle's importunities, they cannot, at this time of day, think of subjecting their necks again to the feudal yoke, which was effectually broken by the act of 1748, abolishing vassalage and hereditary jurisdictions."

"Ay, but that my uncle considers as the act of an usurping government," said Lilius.

"Like enough *he* may think so," answered her brother, "for he is a superior, and loses his authority by the enactment. But the question is, what the vassals will think of it, who have gained their

freedom from feudal slavery, and have now enjoyed that freedom for many years? However, to cut the matter short, if five hundred men would rise at the wagging of my finger, that finger shall not be raised in a cause which I disapprove of, and upon that my uncle may reckon."

"But you may temporise," said Liliás, upon whom the idea of her uncle's displeasure made evidently a strong impression,—“you may temporise, as most of the gentry in this country do, and let the bubble burst of itself; for it is singular how few of them venture to oppose my uncle directly. I entreat you to avoid direct collision with him. To hear you, the head of the House of Redgauntlet, declare against the family of Stewart, would either break his heart, or drive him to some act of desperation."

"Yes, but, Liliás, you forget that the consequences of such an act of complaisance might be, that the House of Redgauntlet and I might lose both our heads at one blow."

"Alas!" said she, "I had forgotten that danger. I have grown familiar with perilous intrigues, as the nurses in a pest-house are said to become accustomed to the air around them, till they forget even that it is noisome."

"And yet," said Darsie, "if I could free myself from him without coming to an open rupture—Tell me, Liliás, do you think it possible that he can have any immediate attempt in view?"

"To confess the truth," answered Liliás, "I cannot doubt that he has. There has been an unusual bustle among the Jacobites of late. They have hopes, as I told you, from circumstances unconnected with their own strength. Just before you came to the country, my uncle's desire to find you out became, if possible, more eager than ever—he talked of men to be presently brought together, and of your name and influence for raising them. At this very time your first visit to Brokenburn took place. A suspicion arose in my uncle's mind that you might be the youth he sought, and it was strengthened by papers and letters which the rascal Nixon did not hesitate to take from your pocket. Yet a mistake might have occasioned a fatal explosion; and my uncle therefore posted to Edinburgh to follow out the clew he had obtained, and fished enough of information from old Mr Fairford to make him certain that you were the person he sought. Meanwhile, and at the expense of some personal and perhaps too bold exertion, I endeavoured, through your friend young Fairford, to put you on your guard."

"Without success," said Darsie, blushing under his mask, when he recollected how he had mistaken his sister's meaning.

"I do not wonder that my warning was fruitless," said she; "the thing was doomed to be. Besides, your escape would have been difficult. You were dogged the whole time you were at the Shepherd's Bush and at Mount Sharon by a spy who scarcely ever left you."

"The wretch, little Benjie!" exclaimed Darsie. "I will wring the monkey's neck round, the first time we meet."

"It was he indeed who gave constant information of your motions to Cristal Nixon," said Liliás.

"And Cristal Nixon—I owe him, too, a day's work in harvest," said Darsie; "for I am mistaken if he was not the person that struck me down when I was made prisoner among the rioters."

"Like enough; for he has a head and hand for any villany. My uncle was very angry about it; for though the riot was made to have an opportunity of carrying you off in the confusion, as well as to put the fishermen at variance with the public law, it would have been his last thought to have injured a hair of your head. But Nixon has insinuated himself into all my uncle's secrets, and some of these are so dark and dangerous, that though there are few things he would *not* dare, I doubt if he dare quarrel with him.—And yet I know that of Cristal, would move my uncle to pass his sword through his body."

"What is it, for Heaven's sake?" said Darsie. "I have a particular desire for wishing to know."

"The old, brutal desperado, whose face and mind are a libel upon human nature, has had the insolence to speak to his master's niece as one whom he was at liberty to admire; and when I turned on him with the anger and contempt he merited, the wretch grumbled out something, as if he held the destiny of our family in his hand."

"I thank you, Liliás," said Darsie, eagerly,—*"I thank you with all my heart for this communication. I have blamed myself as a Christian man for the indescribable longing I felt from the first moment I saw that rascal, to send a bullet through his head; and now you have perfectly accounted for and justified this very laudable wish. I wonder my uncle, with the powerful sense you describe him to be possessed of, does not see through such a villain."*

"I believe he knows him to be capable of much evil," answered Liliás—"selfish, obdurate, brutal, and a man-hater. But then he conceives him to possess the qualities most requisite for a conspirator—undaunted courage, imperturbable coolness and address, and inviolable fidelity. In the last particular he may be mistaken. I have heard Nixon blamed for the manner in which our poor father was taken after Culloden."

"Another reason for my innate aversion," said Darsie; "but I will be on my guard with him."

"See, he observes us closely," said Liliás. "What a thing is conscience!—He knows we are now speaking of him, though he cannot have heard a word that we have said."

It seemed as if she had guessed truly; for Cristal Nixon at that moment rode up to them, and said, with an affectation of jocularly which sat very ill on his sullen features, "Come, young ladies, you have had time enough for your chat this morning, and your tongues, I think, must be tired. We are going to pass a village, and I must beg you to separate—you, Miss Liliás, to ride a little behind—and you, Mrs, or Miss, or Master, whichever you choose to be called, to be jogging a little before."

Liliás checked her horse without speaking, but not until she had given her brother an expressive look, recommending caution; to which he replied by a signal, indicating that he understood and would comply with her request.

CHAPTER XX.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

LEFT to his solitary meditations, Darsie (for we will still term Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet of that ilk by the name to which the reader is habituated) was surprised not only at the alteration of his own state and condition, but at the equanimity with which he felt himself disposed to view all these vicissitudes.

His fever-fit of love had departed like a morning's dream, and left nothing behind but a painful sense of shame, and a resolution to be more cautious ere he again indulged in such romantic visions. His station in society was changed from that of a wandering, unowned youth, in whom none appeared to take an interest, excepting the strangers by whom he had been educated, to the heir of a noble house, possessed of such influence and such property, that it seemed as if the progress or arrest of important political events were likely to depend upon his resolution. Even this sudden elevation, the more than fulfilment of those wishes which had haunted him ever since he was able to form a wish on the subject, was contemplated by Darsie, volatile as his disposition was, without more than a few thrills of gratified vanity.

It is true, there were circumstances in his present situation to counterbalance such high advantages. To be a prisoner in the hands of a man so determined as his uncle, was no agreeable consideration, when he was calculating how he might best dispute his pleasure, and refuse to join him in the perilous enterprise which he seemed to meditate. Outlawed and desperate himself, Darsie could not doubt that his uncle was surrounded by men capable of anything—that he was restrained by no personal considerations—and therefore what degree of compulsion he might apply to his brother's son, or in what manner he might feel at liberty to punish his contumacy, should he disavow the Jacobite cause, must depend entirely upon the limits of his own conscience; and who was to answer for the conscience of a heated enthusiast, who considers opposition to the party he has espoused, as treason to the welfare of his country? After a short interval, Cristal Nixon was pleased to throw some light upon the subject which agitated him.

When that grim satellite rode up without ceremony close to Darsie's side, the latter felt his very flesh creep with abhorrence, so little was he able to endure his presence, since the story of Lilius had added to his instinctive hatred of the man.

"His voice, too, sounded like that of a screech-owl, as he said, 'So, my young cock of the north, you now know it all, and no doubt are blessing your uncle for stirring you up to such an honourable action.'"

"I will acquaint my uncle with my sentiments on the subject, before I make them known to any one else," said Darsie, scarcely

prevailing on his tongue to utter even these few words in a civil manner.

"Umph," murmured Cristal betwixt his teeth. "Close as wax, I see; and perhaps not quite so pliable.—But take care, my pretty youth," he added, scornfully; "Hugh Redgauntlet will prove a rough colt-breaker—he will neither spare whipcord nor spur-rowel, I promise you."

"I have already said, Mr Nixon," answered Darsie, "that I will canvass those matters of which my sister has informed me, with my uncle himself, and with no other person."

"Nay, but a word of friendly advice would do you no harm, young master," replied Nixon. "Old Redgauntlet is apter at a blow than a word—likely to bite before he barks—the true man for giving Scarborough warning first knock you down, then bid you stand.—So, methinks, a little kind warning as to consequences were not amiss, lest they come upon you unawares."

"If the warning is really kind, Mr Nixon," said the young man, "I will hear it thankfully; and indeed, if otherwise, I must listen to it whether I will or no, since I have at present no choice of company or of conversation."

"Nay, I have but little to say," said Nixon, affecting to give to his sullen and dogged manner the appearance of an honest bluntness; "I am as little apt to throw away words as any one. But here is the question—Will you join heart and hand with your uncle, or no?"

"What if I should say Ay?" said Darsie, determined, if possible, to conceal his resolution from this man.

"Why, then," said Nixon, somewhat surprised at the readiness of his answer, "all will go smooth, of course—you will take share in this noble undertaking, and, when it succeeds, you will exchange your open helmet for an Earl's coronet perhaps."

"And how if it fails?" said Darsie.

"Thereafter as it may be," said Nixon; "they who play at bowls must meet with rubbers."

"Well, but suppose, then, I have some foolish tenderness for my windpipe, and that, when my uncle proposes the adventure to me, I should say No—how then, Mr Nixon?"

"Why, then, I would have you look to yourself, young master—There are sharp laws in France against refractory pupils—*lettres de cachet* are easily come by, when such men as we are concerned with interest themselves in the matter."

"But we are not in France," said poor Darsie, through whose blood ran a cold shivering at the idea of a French prison.

"A fast-sailing lugger will soon bring you there though, snug stowed under hatches, like a cask of moonlight."

"But the French are at peace with us," said Darsie, "and would not dare——"

"Why, who would ever hear of you?" interrupted Nixon; "do you imagine that a foreign Court would call you up for judgment, and put the sentence of imprisonment in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, as they do at the Old Bailey?—No, no, young gentleman—the gates of the Bastille, and of Mont Saint Michel, and the Castle of Vincennes,

move on d—d easy hinges when they let folk in—not the least jar is heard. There are cool cells there for hot heads—as calm, and quiet, and dark, as you could wish in Bedlam—and the dismissal comes when the carpenter brings the prisoner's coffin, and not sooner.”

“Well, Mr Nixon,” said Darsie, affecting a cheerfulness which he was far from feeling, “mine is a hard case—a sort of hanging choice, you will allow—since I must either offend our own government here, and run the risk of my life for doing so, or be doomed to the dungeons of another country, whose laws I have never offended, since I have never trod its soil—Tell me what you would do if you were in my place.”

“I’ll tell you that when I *am* there,” said Nixon, and, checking his horse, fell back to the rear of the little party.

“It is evident,” thought the young man, “that the villain believes me completely noosed, and perhaps has the ineffable impudence to suppose that my sister must eventually succeed to the possessions which have occasioned my loss of freedom, and that his own influence over the destinies of our unhappy family may secure him possession of the heiress; but he shall perish by my hand first! I must now be on the alert to make my escape, if possible, before I am forced on shipboard—Blind Willie will not, I think, desert me without an effort on my behalf, especially if he has learned that I am the son of his late unhappy patron. What a change is mine! Whilst I possessed neither rank nor fortune, I lived safely and unknown, under the protection of the kind and respectable friends whose hearts Heaven had moved towards me—Now that I am the head of an honourable house, and that enterprises of the most daring character wait my decision, and retainers and vassals seem ready to rise at my beck, my safety consists chiefly in the attachment of a blind stroller!”

While he was revolving these things in his mind, and preparing himself for the interview with his uncle, which could not but be a stormy one, he saw Hugh Redgauntlet come riding slowly back to meet them, without any attendants. Cristal Nixon rode up as he approached, and, as they met, fixed on him a look of inquiry.

“The fool, Crackenthorp,” said Redgauntlet, “has let strangers into his house. Some of his smuggling comrades, I believe; we must ride slowly to give him time to send them packing.”

“Did you see any of your friends?” said Cristal.

“Three, and have letters from many more. They are unanimous on the subject you wot of—and the point must be conceded to them, or, far as the matter has gone, it will go no farther.”

“You will hardly bring the Father to stoop to his flock,” said Cristal, with a sneer.

“He must, and shall!” answered Redgauntlet, briefly. “Go to the front, Cristal—I would speak with my nephew. I trust, Sir Arthur Redgauntlet, you are satisfied with the manner in which I have discharged my duty to your sister?”

“There can be no fault found to her manners or sentiments,” answered Darsie; “I am happy in knowing a relative so amiable.”

“I am glad of it,” answered Mr Redgauntlet. “I am no nice

judge of women's qualifications, and my life has been dedicated to one great object; so that since she left France she has had but little opportunity of improvement. I have subjected her, however, as little as possible to the inconveniences and privations of my wandering and dangerous life. From time to time she has resided for weeks and months with families of honour and respectability, and I am glad that she has, in your opinion, the manners and behaviour which become her birth."

Darsie expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and there was a little pause, which Redgauntlet broke by solemnly addressing his nephew.

"For you, my nephew, I also hoped to have done much. The weakness and timidity of your mother sequestered you from my care, or it would have been my pride and happiness to have trained up the son of my unhappy brother in those paths of honour in which our ancestors have always trod."

"Now comes the storm," thought Darsie to himself, and began to collect his thoughts, as the cautious master of a vessel furls his sails, and makes his ship snug, when he discerns the approaching squall.

"My mother's conduct, in respect to me, might be misjudged," he said, "but it was founded on the most anxious affection."

"Assuredly," said his uncle, "and I have no wish to reflect on her memory, though her mistrust has done so much injury, I will not say to me, but to the cause of my unhappy country. Her scheme was, I think, to have made you that wretched pettifogging being, which they still continue to call in derision by the once respectable name of a Scottish Advocate; one of these mongrel things, that must creep to learn the ultimate decision of his causes to the bar of a foreign Court, instead of pleading before the independent and august Parliament of his own native kingdom."

"I did prosecute the study of law for a year or two," said Darsie, "but I found I had neither taste nor talents for the science."

"And left it with scorn, doubtless," said Mr Redgauntlet. "Well, I now hold up to you, my dearest nephew, a more worthy object of ambition. Look eastward—do you see a monument standing on yonder plain, near a hamlet?"

Darsie replied that he did.

"The hamlet is called Burgh-upon-sands, and yonder monument is erected to the memory of the tyrant Edward I. The just hand of Providence overtook him on that spot, as he was leading his bands to complete the subjugation of Scotland, whose civil dissensions began under his accursed policy. The glorious career of Bruce might have been stopped in its outset; the field of Bannockburn might have remained a bloodless turf, if God had not removed, in the very crisis, the crafty and bold tyrant who had so long been Scotland's scourge. Edward's grave is the cradle of our national freedom. It is within sight of that great landmark of our liberty that I have to propose to you an undertaking, second in honour and importance to none since the immortal Bruce stabbed the Red Comyn, and grasped, with his yet bloody hand, the independent crown of Scotland."

He paused for an answer ; but Darsie, overawed by the energy of his manner, and unwilling to commit himself by a hasty explanation, remained silent.

"I will not suppose," said Hugh Redgauntlet, after a pause, "that you are either so dull as not to comprehend the import of my words—or so dastardly as to be dismayed by my proposal—or so utterly degenerate from the blood and sentiments of your ancestors, as not to feel my summons as the horse hears the war-trumpet."

"I will not pretend to misunderstand you, sir," said Darsie ; "but an enterprise directed against a dynasty now established for three reigns requires strong arguments, both in point of justice and of expediency, to recommend it to men of conscience and prudence."

"I will not," said Redgauntlet, while his eyes sparkled with anger,—"I will not hear you speak a word against the justice of that enterprise, for which your oppressed country calls with the voice of a parent, entreating her children for aid—or against that noble revenge which your father's blood demands from his dishonoured grave. His skull is yet standing over the Rikargate,¹ and even its bleak and mouldered jaws command you to be a man. I ask you, in the name of God, and of your country, will you draw your sword, and go with me to Carlisle, were it but to lay your father's head, now the perch of the obscene owl and carrion crow, and the scoff of every ribald clown, in consecrated earth, as befits his long ancestry?"

Darsie, unprepared to answer an appeal urged with so much passion, and not doubting a direct refusal would cost him his liberty or life, was again silent.

"I see," said his uncle, in a more composed tone, "that it is not deficiency of spirit, but the grovelling habits of a confined education, among the poor-spirited class you were condemned to herd with, that keeps you silent. You scarce yet believe yourself a Redgauntlet; your pulse has not yet learned the genuine throb that answers to the summons of honour and of patriotism."

"I trust," replied Darsie, at last, "that I shall never be found indifferent to the call of either ; but to answer them with effect—even were I convinced that they now sounded in my ear—I must see some reasonable hope of success in the desperate enterprise in which you would involve me. I look around me, and I see a settled government—an established authority—a born Briton on the throne—the very Highland mountaineers, upon whom alone the trust of the exiled family reposed, assembled into regiments, which act under the orders of the existing dynasty.² France has been utterly dismayed by the tremendous lessons of the last war, and will hardly provoke another. All without and within the kingdom is adverse to encountering a hopeless struggle, and you alone, sir, seem willing to undertake a desperate enterprise."

¹ The northern gate of Carlisle was long garnished with the heads of the Scottish rebels executed in 1745.

² The Highland regiments were first employed by the celebrated Earl of Chatham, who assumed to himself no small degree of praise for having called forth to the support of the country and the government, the valour which had been too often directed against both.

"And would undertake it were it ten times more desperate; and have agitated it when ten times the obstacles were interposed. Have I forgot my brother's blood?—Can I—dare I even now repeat the Pater Noster, since my enemies and the murderers remain unforgiven? Is there an art I have not practised—a privation to which I have not submitted, to bring on the crisis, which I now behold arrived? Have I not been a vowed and a devoted man, foregoing every comfort of social life, renouncing even the exercise of devotion unless when I might name in prayer my prince and country, submitting to everything to make converts to this noble cause? Have I done all this, and shall I now stop short?" Darsie was about to interrupt him, but he pressed his hand affectionately upon his shoulder, and enjoining, or rather imploring silence,—“Peace,” he said, “heir of my ancestors’ fame—heir of all my hopes and wishes—Peace, son of my slaughtered brother! I have sought for thee, and mourned for thee, as a mother for an only child. Do not let me again lose you in the moment when you are restored to my hopes. Believe me, I distrust so much my own impatient temper, that I entreat you as the dearest boon, do nought to awaken it at this crisis.”

Darsie was not sorry to reply, that his respect for the person of his relation would induce him to listen to all which he had to apprise him of, before he formed any definite resolution upon the weighty subjects of deliberation which he proposed to him.

“Deliberation!” repeated Redgauntlet, impatiently; “and yet it is not ill said. I wish there had been more warmth in thy reply, Arthur, but I must recollect were an eagle bred in a falcon’s mew, and hooded like a reclaimed hawk, he could not at first gaze steadily on the sun. Listen to me, my dearest Arthur. The state of this nation no more implies prosperity, than the florid colour of a feverish patient is a symptom of health. All is false and hollow. The apparent success of Chatham’s administration has plunged the country deeper in debt than all the barren acres of Canada are worth, were they as fertile as Yorkshire—the dazzling lustre of the victories of Minden and Quebec have been dimmed by the disgrace of the hasty peace—by the war England, at immense expense, gained nothing but honour, and that she has gratuitously resigned. Many eyes, formerly cold and indifferent, are now looking towards the line of our ancient and rightful monarchs, as the only refuge in the approaching storm—the rich are alarmed—the nobles are disgusted—the populace are inflamed—and a band of patriots, whose measures are more safe than their numbers are few, have resolved to set up King Charles’s standard.”

“But the military,” said Darsie—“how can you, with a body of unarmed and disorderly insurgents, propose to encounter a regular army? The Highlanders are now totally disarmed.”

“In a great measure, perhaps,” answered Redgauntlet; “but the policy which raised the Highland regiments has provided for that. We have already friends in these corps; nor can we doubt for a moment what their conduct will be, when the white cockade is once more mounted. The rest of the standing army has been greatly reduced since the peace; and we reckon confidently on our standard being joined by thousands of the disbanded troops.”

"Alas!" said Darsie, "and is it upon such vague hopes as these, the inconstant humour of a crowd, or of a disbanded soldiery, that men of honour are invited to risk their families, their property, their life?"

"Men of honour, boy," said Redgauntlet, his eyes glancing with impatience, "set life, property, family, and all at stake, when that honour commands it! We are not now weaker than when seven men, landing in the wilds of Moidart, shook the throne of the usurper till it tottered—won two pitched fields, besides overrunning one kingdom and the half of another, and, but for treachery, would have achieved what their venturous successors are now to attempt in their turn."

"And will such an attempt be made in serious earnest?" said Darsie. "Excuse me, my uncle, if I can scarce believe a fact so extraordinary. Will there really be found men of rank and consequence sufficient to renew the adventure of 1745?"

"I will not give you my confidence by halves, Sir Arthur," replied his uncle—"Look at that scroll—what say you to these names? are they not the flower of the western shires—of Wales—of Scotland?"

"The paper contains indeed the names of many that are great and noble," replied Darsie, after perusing it; "but——"

"But what?" asked his uncle, impatiently; "do you doubt the ability of those nobles and gentlemen to furnish the aid in men and money, at which they are rated?"

"Not their ability certainly," said Darsie, "for of that I am no competent judge;—but I see in this scroll the name of Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet of that Ilk, rated at an hundred men and upwards—I certainly am ignorant how he is to redeem that pledge."

"I will be responsible for the men," replied Hugh Redgauntlet.

"But, my dear uncle," added Darsie, "I hope for your sake, that the other individuals, whose names are here written, have had more acquaintance with your plan than I have been indulged with."

"For thee and thine I can be myself responsible," said Redgauntlet; "for if thou hast not the courage to head the force of thy house, the leading shall pass to other hands, and thy inheritance shall depart from thee, like vigour and verdure from a rotten ranch. For these honourable persons, a slight condition there is which they annex to their friendship—something so trifling that it is scarce worthy of mention. This boon granted to them by him who is most interested, there is no question they will take the field in the manner there stated."

Again Darsie perused the paper, and felt himself still less inclined to believe that so many men of family and fortune were likely to embark in an enterprise so fatal. It seemed as if some rash plotter had put down at a venture the names of all whom common report painted with Jacobitism; or if it was really the act of the individuals named, he suspected that they must be aware of some mode of excusing themselves from compliance with its purport. It was impossible, he thought, that Englishmen, of large fortune, who had failed to join Charles when he broke into England at the head of a victo-

rious army, should have the least thoughts of encouraging a descent when circumstances were so much less propitious. He therefore concluded the enterprise would fall to pieces of itself, and that his best way was, in the mean time, to remain silent, unless the actual approach of a crisis (which might, however, never arrive) should compel him to give a downright refusal to his uncle's proposition: and if, in the interim, some door for escape should be opened, he resolved within himself not to omit availing himself of it.

Hugh Redgauntlet watched his nephew's looks for some time, and then, as if arriving from some other process of reasoning at the same conclusion, he said, "I have told you, Sir Arthur, that I do not urge your immediate accession to my proposal; indeed the consequences of a refusal would be so dreadful to yourself, so destructive to all the hopes which I have nursed, that I would not risk, by a moment's impatience, the object of my whole life. Yes, Arthur, I have been a self-denying hermit at one time—at another, the apparent associate of outlaws and desperadoes—at another, the subordinate agent of men whom I felt in every way my inferiors—not for any selfish purpose of my own, no, not even to win for myself the renown of being the principal instrument in restoring my King and freeing my country. My first wish on earth is for that restoration and that freedom—my next, that my nephew, the representative of my house, and of the brother of my love, may have the advantage and the credit of all my efforts in the good cause. But," he added darting on Darsie one of his withering frowns, "if Scotland and my father's house cannot stand and flourish together, then perish the very name of Redgauntlet! perish the son of my brother, with every recollection of the glories of my family, of the affections of my youth, rather than my country's cause should be injured in the tithing of a barleycorn! The spirit of Sir Alberick is alive within me at this moment," he continued, drawing up his stately form and sitting erect in his saddle, while he pressed his finger against his forehead; "and if you yourself crossed my path in opposition, swear, by the mark that darkens my brow, that a new deed should be done—a new doom should be deserved!"

He was silent, and his threats were uttered in a tone of voice so deeply resolute, that Darsie's heart sunk within him, when he reflected on the storm of passion which he must encounter, if he declined to join his uncle in a project to which prudence and principle made him equally adverse. He had scarce any hope left but in temporising until he could make his escape, and resolved to avail himself for that purpose of the delay which his uncle seemed not unwilling to grant. The stern, gloomy look of his companion became relaxed by degrees, and presently afterwards he made a sign to Miss Redgauntlet to join the party, and began a forced conversation on ordinary topics; in the course of which Darsie observed that his sister seemed to speak under the most cautious restraint, weighing every word before she uttered it, and always permitting her uncle to give the tone to the conversation, though of the most trifling kind. This seemed to him (such an opinion had he already entertained of his sister's good sense and firmness) the strongest proof he had y

received of his uncle's peremptory character, since he saw it observed with so much deference by a young person, whose sex might have given her privileges, and who seemed by no means deficient either in spirit or firmness.

The little cavalcade was now approaching the house of Father Crackenthorp, situated, as the reader knows, by the side of the Solway, and not far distant from a rude pier, near which lay several fishing-boats, which frequently acted in a different capacity. The house of the worthy publican was also adapted to the various occupations which he carried on, being a large scrambling assemblage of cottages attached to a house of two stories, roofed with flags of sandstone—the original mansion, to which the extensions of Mr Crackenthorp's trade had occasioned his making many additions. Instead of the single long watering-trough, which usually distinguishes the front of the English public-house of the second class, there were three conveniences of that kind, for the use, as the landlord used to say, of the troop-horses, when the soldiers came to search his house; while a knowing leer and a nod let you understand what species of troops he was thinking of. A huge ash-tree before the door, which had reared itself to a great size and height in spite of the blasts from the neighbouring Solway, overshadowed, as usual, the ale bench, as our ancestors called it, where, though it was still early in the day, several fellows, who seemed to be gentlemen's servants, were drinking beer and smoking. One or two of them wore liveries, which seemed known to Mr Redgauntlet, for he muttered between his teeth, "Fools, fools! were they on a march to hell, they must have their rascals in livery with them, that the whole world might know who were going to be damned."

As he thus muttered, he drew bridle before the door of the place, from which several other lounging guests began to issue, to look with indolent curiosity, as usual, upon an *arrival*.

Redgauntlet sprung from his horse, and assisted his niece to dismount; but, forgetting, perhaps, his nephew's disguise, he did not pay him the attention which his female dress demanded.

The situation of Darsie was indeed something awkward; for Cristal Nixon, out of caution perhaps to prevent escape, had muffled the extreme folds of the riding-skirt with which he was accoutred, around his ankles and under his feet, and there secured it with large corking-pins. We presume that gentlemen-cavaliers my sometimes cast their eyes to that part of the person of the fair equestrians whom they chance occasionally to escort; and if they will conceive their own feet, like Darsie's, muffled in such a labyrinth of folds and amplitude of robe, as modesty doubtless induces the fair creatures to assume upon such occasions, they will allow that, on a first attempt, they might find some awkwardness in dismounting. Darsie, at least, was in such a predicament, for, not receiving adroit assistance from the attendant of Mr Redgauntlet, he stumbled as he dismounted from the horse, and might have had a bad fall, had it not been broken by the gallant interposition of a gentleman, who probably was, on his part, a little surprised at the solid weight of the distressed fair one whom he had the honour to receive in his embrace. But what was

his surprise to that of Darsie's, when the hurry of the moment and of the accident permitted him to see that it was his friend Alan Fairford in whose arms he found himself! A thousand apprehensions rushed on him, mingled with the full career of hope and joy, inspired by the unexpected appearance of his beloved friend at the very crisis, it seemed, of his fate.

He was about to whisper in his ear, cautioning him at the same time to be silent; yet he hesitated for a second or two to effect his purpose, since, should Redgauntlet take the alarm from any sudden exclamation on the part of Alan, there was no saying what consequences might ensue.

Ere he could decide what was to be done, Redgauntlet, who had entered the house, returned hastily, followed by Cristal Nixon. "I'll release you of the charge of this young lady, sir," he said, haughtily, to Alan Fairford, whom he probably did not recognise.

"I had no desire to intrude, sir," replied Alan; "the lady's situation seemed to require assistance—and—but have I not the honour to speak to Mr Herris of Birrenswork?"

"You are mistaken, sir," said Redgauntlet, turning short off and making a sign with his hand to Cristal, who hurried Darsie, however unwillingly, into the house, whispering in his ear, "Come, miss, let us have no making of acquaintance from the windows. Ladies of fashion must be private. Show us a room, Father Crackenthorp."

So saying, he conducted Darsie into the house, interposing at the same time his person betwixt the supposed young lady and the stranger of whom he was suspicious, so as to make communication by signs impossible. As they entered, they heard the sound of a fiddle in the stone-floored and well-sanded kitchen, through which they were about to follow their corpulent host, and where several people seemed engaged in dancing to its strains.

"D—n thee," said Nixon to Crackenthorp, "would you have the lady go through all the mob of the parish?—Hast thou no more private way to our sitting-room?"

"None that is fit for my travelling," answered the landlord, laying his hand on his portly stomach. "I am not Tom Turnpenny, to creep like a lizard through keyholes."

So saying, he kept moving on through the revellers in the kitchen; and Nixon, holding Darsie by his arm, as if to offer the lady support, but in all probability to frustrate any effort at escape, moved through the crowd, which presented a very motley appearance, consisting of domestic servants, country-fellows, seamen, and other idlers, whom Wandering Willie was regaling with his music.

To pass another friend without intimation of his presence would have been actual pusillanimity; and just when they were passing the blind man's elevated seat, Darsie asked him with some emphasis, whether he could not play a Scottish air?—The man's face had been the instant before devoid of all sort of expression, going through his performance like a clown through a beautiful country, too much accustomed to consider it as a task to take any interest in the performance, and, in fact, scarce seeming to hear the noise that he was creating. In a word, he might at the time have made a companion

to my friend Wilkie's inimitable blind crowder. But with Wandering Willie this was only an occasional, and a rare fit of dulness, such as will at times creep over all the professors of the fine arts, arising either from fatigue, or contempt of the present audience, or that caprice which so often tempts painters and musicians, and great actors, in the phrase of the latter, to *walk through* their part, instead of exerting themselves with the energy which acquired their fame. But when the performer heard the voice of Darsie, his countenance became at once illuminated, and showed the complete mistake of those who suppose that the principal point of expression depends upon the eyes. With his face turned to the point from which the sound came, his upper lip a little curved, and quivering with agitation, and with a colour which surprise and pleasure had brought at once into his faded cheek, he exchanged the humdrum hornpipe which he had been sawing out with reluctant and lazy bow, for the fine Scottish air,

"You're welcome, Charlie Stewart,"

which flew from his strings as if by inspiration, and after a breathless pause of admiration among the audience, was received with a clamour of applause, which seemed to show that the name and tendency, as well as the execution of the tune, was in the highest degree acceptable to all the party assembled.

In the mean time Cristal Nixon, still keeping hold of Darsie, and following the landlord, forced his way with some difficulty through the crowded kitchen, and entered a small apartment on the other side of it, where they found Lilius Redgauntlet already seated. Here Nixon gave way to his suppressed resentment, and turning sternly on Crackenthorp, threatened him with his master's severest displeasure, because things were in such bad order to receive his family, when he had given such special advice that he desired to be private. But Father Crackenthorp was not a man to be brow-beaten.

"Why, brother Nixon, thou art angry this morning," he replied; "hast risen from thy wrong side, I think. You know, as well as I, that most of this mob is of the Squire's own making—gentlemen that come with their servants, and so forth, to meet him in the way of business, as old Tom Turnpenny says—the very last that came was sent down with Dick Gardener from Fairladies."

"But the blind scraping scoundrel yonder," said Nixon, "how dared you take such a rascal as that across your threshold at such a time as this?—If the Squire should dream you have a thought of peaching—I am only speaking for your good, Father Crackenthorp."

"Why, look ye, brother Nixon," said Crackenthorp, turning his quid with great composure, "the Squire is a very worthy gentleman, and I'll never deny it; but I am neither his servant nor his tenant, and so he need send me none of his orders till he hears I have put on his livery. As for turning away folk from my door, I might as well plug up the ale-tap, and pull down the sign—and as for peaching, and suchlike, the Squire will find the folk here are as honest to the full as those he brings with him."

"How, you impudent lump of tallow," said Nixon, "what do you mean by that?"

"Nothing," said Crackenthorp, "but that I can tour out as well as another—you understand me—keep good lights in my upper story—know a thing or two more than most folk in this country. If folk will come to my house on dangerous errands, egad they shall not find Joe Crackenthorp a cat's-paw. I'll keep myself clear, you may depend on it, and let every man answer for his own actions—that's my way—Anything wanted, Master Nixon?"

"No—yes—begone!" said Nixon, who seemed embarrassed with the landlord's contumacy, yet desirous to conceal the effect it produced on him.

The door was no sooner closed on Crackenthorp, than Miss Redgauntlet, addressing Nixon, commanded him to leave the room, and go to his proper place.

"How, madam?" said the fellow, sullenly, yet with an air of respect, "Would you have your uncle pistol me for disobeying his orders?"

"He may perhaps pistol you for some other reason, if you do not obey mine," said Liliass, composedly.

"You abuse your advantage over me, madam—I really dare not go—I am on guard over this other Miss here; and if I should desert my post, my life were not worth five minutes' purchase."

"Then know your post, sir," said Liliass, "and watch on the outside of the door. You have no commission to listen to our private conversation, I suppose? Begone, sir, without farther speech or remonstrance, or I will tell my uncle that which you would have reason to repent he should know."

The fellow looked at her with a singular expression of spite, mixed with deference. "You abuse your advantages, madam," he said, "and act as foolishly in doing so as I did in affording you such a hank over me. But you are a tyrant; and tyrants have commonly short reigns."

So saying, he left the apartment.

"The wretch's unparalleled insolence," said Liliass to her brother, "has given me one great advantage over him. For knowing that my uncle would shoot him with as little remorse as a woodcock, if he but guessed at his brazen-faced assurance towards me, he dares not since that time assume, so far as I am concerned, the air of insolent domination which the possession of my uncle's secrets, and the knowledge of his most secret plans, have led him to exert over others of his family."

"In the mean time," said Darsie, "I am happy to see that the landlord of the house does not seem so devoted to him as I apprehended; and this aids the hope of escape which I am nourishing for you and for myself. O Liliass! the truest of friends, Alan Fairford, is in pursuit of me, and is here at this moment. Another humble, but, I think, faithful friend, is also within these dangerous walls."

Liliass laid her finger on her lips and pointed to the door. Darsie took the hint, lowered his voice, and informed her in whispers of the

arrival of Fairford, and that he believed he had opened a communication with Wandering Willie. She listened with the utmost interest, and had just begun to reply, when a loud noise was heard in the kitchen, caused by several contending voices, amongst which Darsie thought he could distinguish that of Alan Fairford.

Forgetting how little his own condition permitted him to become the assistant of another, Darsie flew to the door of the room, and finding it locked and bolted on the outside, rushed against it with all his force, and made the most desperate efforts to burst it open, notwithstanding the entreaties of his sister that he would compose himself, and recollect the condition in which he was placed. But the door, framed to withstand attacks from excisemen, constables, and other personages considered as worthy to use what are called the King's keys,¹ "and therewith to make lockfast places open and patent," set his efforts at defiance. Meantime the noise continued without, and we are to give an account of its origin in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

JOE CRACKENTHORP'S public-house had never, since it first reared its chimneys on the banks of the Solway, been frequented by such a miscellaneous group of visitors as had that morning become its guests. Several of them were persons whose quality seemed much superior to their dresses and modes of travelling. The servants who attended them contradicted the inferences to be drawn from the garb of their masters, and, according to the custom of the knights of the rainbow, gave many hints that they were not people to serve any but men of first-rate consequence. These gentlemen, who had come thither chiefly for the purpose of meeting with Mr Redgauntlet, seemed moody and anxious, conversed and walked together, apparently in deep conversation, and avoided any communication with the chance travellers whom accident brought that morning to the same place of resort.

As if Fate had set herself to confound the plans of the Jacobite conspirators, the number of travellers was unusually great, their appearance respectable, and they filled the public tap-room of the inn, where the political guests had already occupied most of the private apartments.

Amongst others, honest Joshua Geddes had arrived, travelling, as he said, in the sorrow of the soul, and mourning for the fate of Darsie Latimer as he would for his first-born child. He had skirted the whole coast of the Solway, besides making various trips into the interior, not shunning, on such occasions, to expose himself to the laugh of the scorner, nay, even to serious personal risk, by frequent-

¹ In common parlance, a crowbar and hatchet.

ing the haunts of smugglers, horse-jockeys, and other irregular persons, who looked on his intrusion with jealous eyes, and were apt to consider him as an exciseman in the disguise of a Quaker. All this labour and peril, however, had been undergone in vain. No search he could make obtained the least intelligence of Latimer, so that he began to fear the poor lad had been spirited abroad; for the practice of kidnapping was then not infrequent, especially on the western coasts of Britain, if indeed he had escaped a briefer and more bloody fate.

With a heavy heart he delivered his horse, even Solomon, into the hands of the hostler, and, walking into the inn, demanded from the landlord breakfast and a private room. Quakers and such hosts as old Father Crackenthorp are no congenial spirits; the latter looked askew over his shoulder, and replied, "If you would have breakfast here, friend, you are like to eat it where other folk eat theirs."

"And wherefore can I not," said the Quaker, "have an apartment to myself for my money?"

"Because, Master Jonathan, you must wait till your betters be served, or else eat with your equals."

Joshua Geddes argued the point no farther, but sitting quietly down on the seat which Crackenthorp indicated to him, and calling for a pint of ale, with some bread, butter, and Dutch cheese, began to satisfy the appetite which the morning air had rendered unusually alert.

While the honest Quaker was thus employed, another stranger entered the apartment, and sat down near to the table on which his victuals were placed. He looked repeatedly at Joshua, licked his parched and chopped lips as he saw the good Quaker masticate his bread and cheese, and sucked up his thin chops when Mr Geddes applied the tankard to his mouth, as if the discharge of these bodily functions by another had awakened his sympathies in an uncontrollable degree. At last, being apparently unable to withstand his longings, he asked, in a faltering tone, the huge landlord, who was tramping through the room in all corpulent impatience, "whether he could have a plack-pie?"

"Never heard of such a thing, master," said the landlord, and was about to trudge onward, when the guest, detaining him, said, in a strong Scottish tone, "Ye will maybe have nae whey, then, nor buttermilk, nor ye couldna exhibit a souter's clod?"

"Can't tell what ye are talking about, master," said Crackenthorp.

"Then ye will have nae breakfast that will come within the compass of a shilling Scots?"

"Which is a penny sterling," answered Crackenthorp, with a sneer. "Why, no, Sawney, I can't say as we have—we can't afford it; but you shall have a bellyful for love, as we say in the bull-ring."

"I shall never refuse a fair offer," said the poverty-stricken guest; "and I will say that for the English, if they ware deils, that they are a ceveleesed people to gentlemen that are under a cloud."

"Gentlemen!—humph!" said Crackenthorp—"not a blue-cap among them but halts upon that foot." Then seizing on a dish which still contained a huge cantle of what had been once a princely

mutton pasty, he placed it on the table before the stranger, saying, "There, master gentleman; there is what is worth all the black pies, as you call them, that were ever made of sheep's head."

"Sheep's head is a gude thing, for a' that," replied the guest; but not being spoken so loud as to offend his hospitable entertainer, the interjection might pass for a private protest against the scandal thrown out against the standing dish of Caledonia.

This premised, he immediately began to transfer the mutton and pie-crust from his plate to his lips, in such huge gobbets as if he was refreshing after a three days' fast, and laying in provisions against a whole Lent to come.

Joshua Geddes, in his turn, gazed on him with surprise, having never, he thought, beheld such a gaunt expression of hunger in the act of eating. "Friend," he said, after watching him for some minutes, "if thou gorgest thyself in this fashion, thou wilt assuredly choke. Wilt thou not take a draught out of my cup to help down all that dry meat?"

"Troth," said the stranger, stopping and looking at the friendly propounder, "that's nae bad overtture, as they say in the General Assembly. I have heard waur motions than that frae wiser counsel."

Mr Geddes ordered a quart of home-brewed to be placed before our friend Peter Peebles; for the reader must have already conceived that this unfortunate litigant was the wanderer in question.

The victim of Themis had no sooner seen the flagon than he seized it with the same energy which he had displayed in operating upon the pie—puffed off the froth with such emphasis that some of it lighted on Mr Geddes's head—and then said, as if with a sudden recollection of what was due to civility, "Here's to ye, friend.—What! are ye ower grand to give me an answer, or are ye dull o' hearing?"

"I prithee drink thy liquor, friend," said the good Quaker; "thou meanest it in civility, but we care not for these idle fashions."

"What! ye are a Quaker, are ye?" said Peter; and without farther ceremony reared the flagon to his head, from which he withdrew it not while a single drop of "barley-broo" remained. "That's done you and me muckle gude," he said, sighing as he set down his pot; "but twa mutchkins o' yill between twa folk is a drappie ower little measure. What say ye to anither pot? or shall we cry in a blythe Scots pint at ance? The yill is no amiss."

"Thou mayst call for what thou wilt on thine own charges, friend," said Geddes; "for myself, I willingly contribute to the quenching of thy natural thirst; but I fear it were no such easy matter to relieve thy acquired and artificial drought."

"That is to say, in plain terms, ye are for withdrawing your caution with the folk of the house? You Quaker folk are but fause comforters; but since ye have garred me drink sae muckle cauld yill—me that am no used to the like of it in the forenoon—I think ye might as weel have offered me a glass of brandy or usquabae—I'm nae nice body—I can drink onything that's wet and toothsome."

"Not a drop at my cost, friend," quoth Geddes. "Thou art an old man, and hast perchance a heavy and long journey before thee.

"Thou art, moreover, my countryman, as I judge from thy tongue; and I will not give thee the means of dishonouring thy grey hairs in a strange land."

"Grey hairs, neighbour!" said Peter, with a wink to the bystanders, whom this dialogue began to interest, and who were in hopes of seeing the Quaker played off by the crazed beggar, for such Peter Peebles appeared to be.—"Grey hairs! The Lord mend your eyesight, neighbour, that disna ken grey hairs frae a tow wig!"

This jest procured a shout of laughter, and, what was still more acceptable than dry applause, a man who stood beside called out, "Father Crackenthorp, bring a nipperkin of brandy. I'll bestow a dram on this fellow, were it but for that very word."

The brandy was immediately brought by a wench who acted as bar-maid; and Peter, with a grin of delight, filled a glass, quaffed it off, and then saying, "God bless me! I was so unmannerly as not to drink to ye—I think the Quaker has smitten me wi' his ill-bred havings,"—he was about to fill another, when his hand was arrested by his new friend; who said at the same time, "No, no, friend—fair play's a jewel—time about, if you please." And filling a glass for himself, emptied it as gallantly as Peter could have done. "What say you to that, friend?" he continued, addressing the Quaker.

"Nay, friend," answered Joshua, "it went down thy throat, not mine; and I have nothing to say about what concerns me not; but if thou art a man of humanity, thou wilt not give this poor creature the means of debauchery. Bethink thee that they will spurn him from the door, as they would do a houseless and masterless dog, and that he may die on the sands or on the common. And if he has through thy means been rendered incapable of helping himself, thou shalt not be innocent of his blood."

"Faith, Broadbrim, I believe thou art right, and the old gentleman in the flaxen jazy shall have no more of the comforter—Besides, we have business in hand to-day, and this fellow, for as mad as he looks, may have a nose on his face after all.—Hark ye, father,—what is your name, and what brings you into such an out-of-the-way corner?"

"I am not just free to condescend on my name," said Peter; "and as for my business—there is a wee dribble of brandy in the stoup—it would be wrang to leave it to the lass—it is learning her bad usages."

"Well, thou shalt have the brandy, and be d—d to thee, if thou wilt tell me what you are making here."

"Seeking a young advocate chap that they ca' Alan Fairford, that has played me a slippery trick, an ye maun ken a' about the cause," said Peter.

"An advocate, man!" answered the Captain of the Jumping Jenny—for it was he, and no other, who had taken compassion on Peter's drought; "why, Lord help thee, thou art on the wrong side of the Firth to seek advocates, whom I take to be Scottish lawyers, not English."

"English lawyers, man!" exclaimed Peter, "the deil a lawyer's in a' England."

"I wish from my soul it were true," said Ewart; "but what the devil put that in your head?"

"Lord, man, I got a grip of ane of their attorneys in Carlisle, and he tauld me that there wasna a lawyer in England, ony mair than himsell, that kend the nature of a multiplepinding! And when I tauld him how this loopy lad, Alan Fairford, had served me, he said I might bring an action on the case—just as if the case hadna as mony actions already as one case can weel carry. By my word, it is a gude case, and muckle has it borne, in its day, of various procedure—but it's the barley-pickle breaks the naig's back, and wi' my consent it shall not hae ony mair burden laid upon it."

"But this Alan Fairford?" said Nanty—"come—sip up the drop of brandy, man, and tell me some more about him, and whether you are seeking him for good or for harm."

"For my ain gude, and for his harm, to be sure," said Peter. "Think of his having left my cause in the dead-thraw between the tyneing and the winning, and capering off into Cumberland here, after a wild loup-the-tether lad the ca' Darsie Latimer."

"Darsie Latimer!" said Mr Geddes, hastily; "do you know anything of Darsie Latimer?"

"Maybe I do, and maybe I do not," answered Peter; "I am no free to answer everybody's interrogatory, unless it is put judicially, and by form of law—specially where folk think so much of a caup of sour yill, or a thimblefu' of brandy. But as for this gentleman, that has shown himself a gentleman at breakfast, and will show himself a gentleman at the meridian, I am free to condescend upon any points in the cause that may appear to bear upon the question at issue."

"Why, all I want to know from you, my friend, is, whether you are seeking to do this Mr Alan Fairford good or harm; because, if you come to do him good, I think you could maybe get speech of him—and if to do him harm, I will take the liberty to give you a cast across the Firth, with fair warning not to come back on such an errand, lest worse come of it."

The manner and language of Ewart were such, that Joshua Geddes resolved to keep cautious silence, till he could more plainly discover whether he was likely to aid or impede him in his researches after Darsie Latimer. He therefore determined to listen attentively to what should pass between Peter and the seaman, and to watch for an opportunity of questioning the former, so soon as he should be separated from his new acquaintance.

"I wad by no means," said Peter Peebles, "do any substantial harm to the poor lad Fairford, who has had mony a gowd guinea of mine, as weel as his father before him; but I wad hae him brought back to the minding of my business and his ain; and maybe I wadna insist farther in my action of damages against him, than for refunding the fees, and for some annual rent on the principal sum, due frae the day on which he should have recovered it for me, plack and bawbee, at the great advising; for ye are aware, that is the least that I can ask *nomine damni*; and I have nae thought to break down the lad bodily a' thegither—we maun live and let live—forgie and forget."

"The deuce take me, friend Broadbrim," said Nanty Ewart, looking to the Quaker, "if I can make out what this old scarecrow means.

If I thought it was fitting that Master Fairford should see him, why perhaps it is a matter that could be managed. Do you know anything about the old fellow?—you seemed to take some charge of him just now.”

“No more than I should have done by any one in distress,” said Geddes, not sorry to be appealed to; “but I will try what I can do to find out who he is, and what he is about in this country—But are we not a little too public in this open room?”

“It’s well thought of,” said Nanty; and at his command the bar-maid ushered the party into a side-booth, Peter attending them, in the instinctive hope that there would be more liquor drunk among them before parting. They had scarce sat down in their new apartment, when the sound of a violin was heard in the room which they had just left.

“I’ll awa back yonder,” said Peter, rising up again; “yon’s the sound of a fiddle, and when there is music, there’s aye something ganging to eat or drink.”

“I am just going to order something here,” said the Quaker; “but, in the mean time, have you any objection, my good friend, to tell us your name?”

“None in the world, if you are wanting to drink to me by name and surname,” answered Peebles; “but, otherwise, I would rather evite your interrogatories.”

“Friend,” said the Quaker, “it is not for thine own health, seeing thou hast drunk enough already—however—Here, handmaiden—bring me a gill of sherry.”

“Sherry’s but shilpit drink, and a gill’s a sma’ measure for twa gentlemen to crack ower at their first acquaintance. But let us see your sneaking gill of sherry,” said Poor Peter, thrusting forth his huge hand to seize on the diminutive pewter measure, which, according to the fashion of the time, contained the generous liquor freshly drawn from the butt.

“Nay, hold, friend,” said Joshua, “thou has not yet told me what name and surname I am to call thee by.”

“D—d sly in the Quaker,” said Nanty, apart, “to make him pay for his liquor before he gives it him. Now, I am such a fool, that I should have let him get too drunk to open his mouth before I thought of asking him a question.”

“My name is Peter Peebles, then,” said the litigant, rather sulkily, as one who thought his liquor too sparingly meted out to him; “and what have you to say to that?”

“Peter Peebles?” repeated Nanty Ewart, and seemed to muse upon something which the words brought to his remembrance, while the Quaker pursued his examination.

“But I prithee, Peter Peebles, what is thy farther designation? Thou knowest, in our country, that some men are distinguished by their craft and calling, as cordwainers, fishers, weavers, or the like, and some by their titles as proprietors of land (which savours of vanity)—Now, how may you be distinguished from others of the same name?”

“As Peter Peebles of the great plea of Poor Peter Peebles

against Plainstones, *et per contra*—If I am laird of naething else, I am aye a *dominus litis*."

"It's but a poor lairdship, I doubt," said Joshua.

"Pray, Mr Peebles," said Nanty, interrupting the conversation abruptly, "were not you once a burgess of Edinburgh?"

"Was I a burgess!" said Peter, indignantly, "and *am* I not a burgess even now? I have done nothing to forfeit my right, I trow—once provost and aye my lord."

"Well, Mr Burgess, tell me farther, have you not some property in the Gude Town?" continued Ewart.

"Troth have I—that is, before my misfortunes, I had twa or three bonny bits of mailings amang the closes and wynds, forby the shop and the story abune it. But Plainstones has put me to the causeway now. Never mind though, I will be upsides with him yet."

"Had not you once a tenement in the Covenant Close?" again demanded Nanty.

"You have hit it, lad, though ye look not like a Covenanter," said Peter; "we'll drink to its memory—[Hout! the heart's at the mouth o' that ill-faur'd bit stoup already!]
—it brought a rent, reckoning from the crawstep to the groundsill, that ye might ca' fourteen pund a-year, forby the laigh cellar that was let to Lucky Littleworth."

"And do you not remember that you had a poor old lady for your tenant, Mrs Cantrips of Kittlebasket?" said Nanty, suppressing his emotion with difficulty.

"Remember! G—d, I have gude cause to remember her," said Peter; "for she turned a dyvour on my hands, the auld besom! and, after a' that the law could do to make me satisfied and paid, in the way of poinding and distrenzieing, and sae forth, as the law will, she ran awa to the Charity Workhouse, a matter of twenty pounds Scots in my debt—it's a great shame and oppression that Charity Workhouse, taking in bankrupt dyvours that canna pay their honest creditors."

"Methinks, friend," said the Quaker, "thine own rags might teach thee compassion for other people's nakedness."

"Rags!" said Peter, taking Joshua's words literally; "does ony wise body put on their best coat when they are travelling, and keeping company with Quakers, and such other cattle as the road affords?"

"The old lady *died*, I have heard," said Nanty, affecting a moderation which was belied by accents that faltered with passion.

"She might live or die, for what I care," answered Peter the Cruel; "what business have folk to do to live, that canna live as law will, and satisfy their just and lawful creditors?"

"And you—you that are now yourself trodden down in the very kennel, are you not sorry for what you have done? Do you not repent having occasioned the poor widow woman's death?"

"What for should I repent?" said Peter; "the law was on my side—a decreet of the Bailies, followed by poinding, and an act of warding—a suspension intented, and the letters found orderly proceeded. I followed the auld rudas through twa Courts—she cost me mair money than her lugs were worth."

"Now, by Heaven!" said Nanty, "I would give a thousand guineas, if I had them, to have you worth my beating! Had you said you repented, it had been between God and your conscience; but to hear you boast of your villany—Do you think it little to have reduced the aged to famine, and the young to infamy—to have caused the death of one woman, the ruin of another, and to have driven a man to exile and despair? By Him that made me, I can scarce keep hands off you!"

"Off me?—I defy ye!" said Peter. "I take this honest man to witness, that if ye stir the neck of my collar, I will have my action for stouthreif, spulzie, oppression, assault and battery. Here's a bra' din, indeed, about an auld wife gaun to the grave, a young limmer to the close-heads and causeway, and a sticket stibbler* to the sea instead of the gallows!"

"Now, by my soul," said Nanty, "this is too mnch! and since you can feel no otherwise, I will try if I cannot beat some humanity into your head and shoulders."

He drew his hanger as he spoke, and although Joshua, who had in vain endeavoured to interrupt the dialogue, to which he foresaw a violent termination, now threw himself between Nanty and the old litigant, he could not prevent the latter from receiving two or three sound slaps over the shoulder with the flat side of the weapon.

Poor Peter Peebles, as inglorious in his extremity as he had been presumptuous in bringing it on, now ran and roared, and bolted out of the apartment and house itself, pursued by Nanty, whose passion became high in proportion to his giving way to its dictates, and by Joshua, who still interfered at every risk, calling upon Nanty to reflect on the age and miserable circumstances of the offender, and upon Poor Peter to stand and place himself under his protection. In front of the house, however, Peter Peebles found a more efficient protector than the worthy Quaker.

CHAPTER XXII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD.

OUR readers may recollect that Fairford had been conducted by Dick Gardener from the House of Fairladies, to the inn of old Father Crackenthrop, in order, as he had been informed by the mysterious Father Buonaventure, that he might have the meeting which he desired with Mr Redgauntlet, to treat with him for the liberty of his friend Darsie. His guide, by the special direction of Mr Ambrose, had introduced him into the public-house by a back-door, and recommended to the landlord to accommodate him with a private apartment, and to treat him with all civility; but in other respects to keep his eye on him, and even to secure his person, if he saw any reason

A student of divinity who has not been able to complete his studies on theology.

to suspect him to be a spy. He was not, however, subjected to any direct restraint, but was ushered into an apartment, where he was requested to await the arrival of the gentleman with whom he wished to have an interview, and who, as Crackenthorp assured him with a significant nod, would be certainly there in the course of an hour. In the meanwhile, he recommended to him, with another significant sign, to keep his apartment, "as there were people in the house who were apt to busy themselves about other folk's matters."

Alan Fairford complied with the recommendation, so long as he thought it reasonable; but when, among a large party riding up to the house, he discerned Redgauntlet, whom he had seen under the name of Mr Herries of Birrenswork, and whom, by his height and strength, he easily distinguished from the rest, he thought it proper to go down to the front of the house, in hopes that, by more closely reconnoitering the party, he might discover if his friend Darsie was among them.

The reader is aware that, by doing so, he had an opportunity of breaking Darsie's fall from his side-saddle, although his disguise and mask prevented his recognising his friend. It may be also recollected, that while Nixon hurried Miss Redgauntlet and her brother into the house, their uncle, somewhat chafed at an unexpected and inconvenient interruption, remained himself in parley with Fairford, who had already successively addressed him by the names of Herries and Redgauntlet; neither of which, any more than the acquaintance of the young lawyer, he seemed at the moment willing to acknowledge, though an air of haughty indifference, which he assumed, could not conceal his vexation and embarrassment.

"If we must needs be acquainted, sir," he said at last—"for which I am unable to see any necessity, especially as I am now particularly disposed to be private—I must entreat you will tell me at once what you have to say, and permit me to attend to matters of more importance."

"My introduction," said Fairford, "is contained in this letter.—(Delivering that of Maxwell.)—I am convinced that, under whatever name it may be your pleasure for the present to be known, it is into your hands, and yours only, that it should be delivered."

Redgauntlet turned the letter in his hand—then read the contents—then again looked upon the letter, and sternly observed, "The seal of the letter has been broken. Was this the case, sir, when it was delivered into your hand?"

Fairford despised a falsehood as much as any man,—unless, perhaps, as Tom Turnpenny might have said, "in the way of business." He answered readily and firmly, "The seal was whole when the letter was delivered to me by Mr Maxwell of Summertrees."

"And did you dare, sir, to break the seal of a letter addressed to me?" said Redgauntlet, not sorry, perhaps, to pick a quarrel upon a point foreign to the tenor of the epistle.

"I have never broken the seal of any letter committed to my charge," said Alan; "not from fear of those to whom such letter might be addressed, but from respect to myself."

"That is well worded," said Redgauntlet; "and yet, young Mr

Counsellor, I doubt whether your delicacy prevented your reading my letter, or listening to the contents as read by some other person after it was opened."

"I certainly did hear the contents read over," said Fairford; "and they were such as to surprise me a good deal."

"Now that," said Redgauntlet, "I hold to be pretty much the same, in *foro conscientiae*, as if you had broken the seal yourself. I shall hold myself excused from entering upon farther discourse with a messenger so faithless; and you may thank yourself if your journey has been fruitless."

"Stay, sir," said Fairford; "and know that I became acquainted with the contents of the paper without my consent—I may even say, against my will; for Mr Buonaventure——"

"Who?" demanded Redgauntlet, in a wild and alarmed manner—"Whom was it you named?"

"Father Buonaventure," said Alan,— "a Catholic priest, as I apprehend, whom I saw at the Misses Arthuret's house, called Fairladies."

"Misses Arthuret!—Fairladies!—A Catholic priest!—Father Buonaventure!" said Redgauntlet, repeating the words of Alan with astonishment.—"Is it possible that human rashness can reach such a point of infatuation?—Tell me the truth, I conjure you, sir—I have the deepest interest to know whether this is more than an idle legend, picked up from hearsay about the country. You are a lawyer, and know the risk incurred by the Catholic clergy, whom the discharge of their duty sends to these bloody shores."

"I am a lawyer, certainly," said Fairford; "but my holding such a respectable condition in life warrants that I am neither an informer nor a spy. Here is sufficient evidence that I have seen Father Buonaventure."

He put Buonaventure's letter into Redgauntlet's hand, and watched his looks closely while he read it. "Double-dyed infatuation!" he muttered, with looks in which sorrow, displeasure, and anxiety were mingled. "'Save me from the indiscretion of my friends,' says the Spaniard; 'I can save myself from the hostility of my enemies.'"

He then read the letter attentively, and for two or three minutes was lost in thought, while some purpose of importance seemed to have gathered and sit brooding upon his countenance. He held up his finger towards his satellite, Cristal Nixon, who replied to his signal with a prompt nod; and with one or two of the attendants approached Fairford in such a manner as to make him apprehensive they were about to lay hold of him.

At this moment a noise was heard from within side of the house, and presently rushed forth Peter Peebles, pursued by Nanty Ewart with his drawn hanger, and the worthy Quaker, who was endeavouring to prevent mischief to others, at some risk of bringing it on himself.

A wilder and yet a more absurd figure can hardly be imagined, than that of Poor Peter clattering along as fast as his huge boots would permit him, and resembling nothing so much as a flying scarecrow; while the thin emaciated form of Nanty Ewart, with the hue

of death on his cheek, and the fire of vengeance glancing from his eye, formed a ghastly contrast with the ridiculous object of his pursuit.

Redgauntlet threw himself between them. "What extravagant folly is this?" he said. "Put up your weapon, Captain. Is this a time to indulge in drunken brawls, or is such a miserable object as that a fitting antagonist for a man of courage?"

"I beg pardon," said the Captain, sheathing his weapon—"I was a little bit out of the way, to be sure; but to know the provocation, a man must read my heart, and that I hardly dare to do myself. But the wretch is safe from me. Heaven has done its own vengeance on us both."

While he spoke in this manner, Peter Peebles, who had at first crept behind Redgauntlet in bodily fear, began now to reassume his spirits. Pulling his protector by the sleeve, "Mr Herries—Mr Herries," he whispered, eagerly, "ye have done me mair than ae gude turn, and if you will but do me anither at this dead pinch, I'll forgie the girdea keg of brandy that you and Captain Sir Harry Redgimlet drank out yon time. Ye sall hae an ample discharge and renunciation, and, though I should see you walking at the Cross of Edinburgh, or standing at the bar of the Court of Justiciary, no the very thumbikins themselves should bring to my memory that ever I saw you in arms yon day."

He accompanied this promise by pulling so hard at Redgauntlet's cloak that he at last turned round. "Idiot! speak in a word what you want."

"Aweel, aweel. In a word then," said Peter Peebles, "I have a warrant on me to apprehend that man that stands there, Alan Fairford by name, and advocate by calling. I bought it from Maister Justice Foxley's clerk, Maister Nicholas Faggot, wi' the guinea that you gied me."

"Ha!" said Redgauntlet, "hast thou really such a warrant? let me see it. Look sharp that no one escape, Cristal Nixon."

Peter produced a huge, greasy, leathern pocket-book, too dirty to permit its original colour to be visible, filled with scrolls of notes, memorials to counsel, and Heaven knows what besides. From amongst this precious mass he culled forth a paper, and placed it in the hands of Redgauntlet, or Herries, as he continued to call him, saying, at the same time, "It's a formal and binding warrant, proceeding on my affidavit made, that the said Alan Fairford, being lawfully engaged in my service, had slipped the tether and fled over the Border, and was now lurking there and thereabouts, to elude and evite the discharge of his bounden duty to me; and therefore granting warrant to constables and others, to seek for, take, and apprehend him, that he may be brought before the Honourable Justice Foxley for examination, and, if necessary, for commitment. Now, though a' this be fairly set down, as I tell ye, yet where am I to get an officer to execute this warrant in sic a country as this, where swords and pistols flee out at a word's speaking, and folk care as little for the peace of King George as the peace of Auld King Coul?—There's that drunken skipper, and that wet Quaker, en-

ticed me into the public this morning, and because I wadna gie them as much brandy as wad have made them blind-drunk, they baith fell on me, and were in the way of guiding me very ill."

While Peter went on in this manner, Redgauntlet glanced his eye over the warrant, and immediately saw that it must be a trick passed by Nicholas Faggot, to cheat the poor insane wretch out of his solitary guinea. But the Justice had actually subscribed it, as he did whatever his clerk presented to him, and Redgauntlet resolved to use it for his own purposes.

Without making any direct answer, therefore, to Peter Peebles, he walked up gravely to Fairford, who had waited quietly for the termination of a scene in which he was not a little surprised to find his client, Mr Peebles, a conspicuous actor.

"Mr Fairford," said Redgauntlet, "there are many reasons which might induce me to comply with the request, or rather the injunctions, of the excellent Father Buonaventure, that I should communicate with you upon the present condition of my ward, whom you know under the name of Darsie Latimer; but no man is better aware than you that the law must be obeyed, even in contradiction to our own feelings; now this poor man has obtained a warrant for carrying you before a magistrate, and, I am afraid, there is a necessity of your yielding to it, although to the postponement of the business which you may have with me."

"A warrant against me!" said Alan, indignantly; "and at that poor miserable wretch's instance?—why, this is a trick, a mere and most palpable trick."

"It may be so," replied Redgauntlet, with great equanimity; "doubtless you know best; only the writ appears regular, and with that respect for the law which has been," he said, with hypocritical formality, "a leading feature of my character through life, I cannot dispense with giving my poor aid to the support of a legal warrant. Look at it yourself, and be satisfied it is no trick of mine."

Fairford ran over the affidavit and the warrant, and then exclaimed once more, that it was an impudent imposition, and that he would hold those who acted upon such a warrant liable in the highest damages. "I guess at your motive, Mr Redgauntlet," he said, "for acquiescing in so ridiculous a proceeding. But be assured you will find that, in this country, one act of illegal violence will not be covered or atoned for by practising another. You cannot, as a man of sense and honour, pretend to say you regard this as a legal warrant."

"I am no lawyer, sir," said Redgauntlet; "and pretend not to know what is or is not law—the warrant is quite formal, and that is enough for me."

"Did ever any one hear," said Fairford, "of an advocate being compelled to return to his task, like a collier or a salter¹ who has deserted his master?"

"I see no reason why he should not," said Redgauntlet, dryly,

¹ See Note Y. *Collier and Salter*.

unless on the ground that the services of the lawyer are the most expensive and least useful of the two."

"You cannot mean this in earnest," said Fairford; "you cannot really mean to avail yourself of so poor a contrivance, to evade the word pledged by your friend, your ghostly father, in my behalf. I may have been a fool for trusting it too easily, but think what you must be if you can abuse my confidence in this manner. I entreat you to reflect that this usage releases me from all promises of secrecy or connivance at what I am apt to think are very dangerous practices, and that——"

"Hark ye, Mr Fairford," said Redgauntlet; "I must here interrupt you for your own sake. One word of betraying what you may have seen, or what you may have suspected, and your seclusion is like to have either a very distant or a very brief termination; in either case a most undesirable one. At present, you are sure of being at liberty in a very few days—perhaps much sooner."

"And my friend," said Alan Fairford, "for whose sake I have run myself into this danger, what is to become of him?—Dark and dangerous man!" he exclaimed, raising his voice, "I will not be again cajoled by deceitful promises——"

"I give you my honour that your friend is well," interrupted Redgauntlet; "perhaps I may permit you to see him, if you will but submit with patience to a fate which is inevitable."

But Alan Fairford, considering his confidence as having been abused, first by Maxwell, and next by the Priest, raised his voice and appealed to all the King's lieges within hearing against the violence with which he was threatened. He was instantly seized on by Nixon and two assistants, who, holding down his arms and endeavouring to stop his mouth, were about to hurry him away.

The honest Quaker, who had kept out of Redgauntlet's presence, now came boldly forward.

"Friend," said he, "thou dost more than thou canst answer. Thou knowest me well, and thou art aware that in me thou hast deeply injured neighbour who was dwelling beside thee in the honesty and simplicity of his heart."

"Tush, Jonathan," said Redgauntlet; "talk not to me, man; it is neither the craft of a young lawyer, nor the *simplicity* of an old hypocrite, can drive me from my purpose."

"By my faith," said the Captain, coming forward in his turn, "this is hardly fair, General; and I doubt," he added, "whether the will of my owners can make me a party to such proceedings—Nay, never fumble with your sword-hilt, but out with it like a man, if you are for a tilting."—He unsheathed his hanger, and continued.—"I will neither see my comrade Fairford, nor the old Quaker, abused. Down all warrants, false or true—curse the justice—confound the unstable!—and here stands little Nanty Ewart to make good what he says against gentle and simple, in spite of horse-shoe or horse-adish either."

The cry of "Down with all warrants!" was popular in the ears of the militia of the inn, and Nanty Ewart was no less so. Fishers, strollers, seamen, smugglers, began to crowd to the spot. Cracken-

thorp endeavoured in vain to mediate. The attendants of Redgauntlet began to handle their firearms; but their master shouted to them to forbear, and, unsheathing his sword as quick as lightning, he rushed on Ewart in the midst of his bravado, and struck his weapon from his hand with such address and force that it flew three yards from him. Closing with him at the same moment, he gave him a severe fall, and waved his sword over his head, to show he was absolutely at his mercy.

"There, you drunken vagabond," he said, "I give you your life—you are no bad fellow, if you could keep from brawling among your friends.—But we all know Nanty Ewart," he said to the crowd around, with a forgiving laugh, which, joined to the awe his prowess had inspired, entirely confirmed their wavering allegiance.

They shouted, "The Laird for ever!" while poor Nanty, rising from the earth, on whose lap he had been stretched so rudely, went in quest of his hanger, lifted it, wiped it, and, as he returned the weapon to the scabbard, muttered between his teeth, "It is true they say of him, and the devil will stand his friend till his hour come; I will cross him no more."

So saying, he slunk from the crowd, cowed and disheartened by his defeat.

"For you, Joshua Geddes," said Redgauntlet, approaching the Quaker, who, with lifted hands and eyes, had beheld the scene of violence, "I shall take the liberty to arrest thee for a breach of the peace, altogether unbecoming thy pretended principles; and I believe it will go hard with thee both in a Court of Justice and among thine own Society of Friends, as they call themselves, who will be but indifferently pleased to see the quiet tenor of their hypocrisy insulted by such violent proceedings."

"I violent!" said Joshua; "I do aught unbecoming the principles of the Friends! I defy thee, man, and I charge thee, as a Christian, to forbear vexing my soul with such charges: it is grievous enough to me to have seen violences which I was unable to prevent."

"O Joshua, Joshua!" said Redgauntlet, with a sardonic smile; "thou light of the faithful in the town of Dumfries and the places adjacent, wilt thou thus fall away from the truth? Hast thou not, before us all, attempted to rescue a man from the warrant of law? Didst thou not encourage that drunken fellow to draw his weapon—and didst thou not thyself flourish thy cudgel in the cause? Think'st thou that the oaths of the injured Peter Peebles, and the conscientious Cristal Nixon, besides those of such gentlemen as look on this strange scene, who not only put on swearing as a garment, but to whom, in Custom-House matters, oaths are literally meat and drink,—dost thou not think, I say, that these men's oaths will go farther than thy Yea and Nay in this matter?"

"I will swear to anything," said Peter. "All is fair when it comes to an oath *ad litem*."

"You do me foul wrong," said the Quaker, undismayed by the general laugh. "I encouraged no drawing of weapons, though I attempted to move an unjust man by some use of argument; I brandished no cudgel, although it may be that the ancient Adam

struggled within me, and caused my hand to grasp mine oaken staff firmer than usual, when I saw innocence borne down with violence. But why talk I what is true and just to thee, who hast been a man of violence from thy youth upwards? Let me rather speak to thee such language as thou canst comprehend. Deliver these young men up to me," he said, when he had led Redgauntlet a little apart from the crowd, "and I will not only free thee from the heavy charge of damages which thou hast incurred by thine outrage upon my property, but I will add ransom for them and for myself. What would it profit thee to do the youths wrong, by detaining them in captivity?"

"Mr Geddes," said Redgauntlet, in a tone more respectful than he had hitherto used to the Quaker, "your language is disinterested, and I respect the fidelity of your friendship. Perhaps we have mistaken each other's principles and motives; but if so, we have not at present time for explanation. Make yourself easy. I hope to raise your friend Darsie Latimer to a pitch of eminence which you will witness with pleasure;—nay, do not attempt to answer me. The other young man shall suffer restraint a few days, probably only a few hours; it is not more than due for his pragmatistical interference in what concerned him not. Do you, Mr Geddes, be so prudent as to take your horse and leave this place, which is growing every moment more unfit for the abode of a man of peace. You may wait the event in safety at Mount Sharon."

"Friend," replied Joshua, "I cannot comply with thy advice; I will remain here, even as thy prisoner, as thou didst but now threaten, rather than leave the youth who hath suffered by and through me and my misfortunes, in his present state of doubtful safety. Wherefore I will not mount my steed Solomon, neither will I turn his head towards Mount Sharon, until I see an end of this matter."

"A prisoner, then, you must be," said Redgauntlet. "I have no time to dispute the matter farther with you. But tell me for what you fix your eyes so attentively on yonder people of mine."

"To speak the truth," said the Quaker, "I admire to behold among them a little wretch of a boy called Benjie, to whom I think Satan has given the power of transporting himself wheresoever mischief is going forward; so that it may be truly said, there is no evil in this land wherein he hath not a finger, if not a whole hand."

The boy, who saw their eyes fixed on him as they spoke, seemed embarrassed, and rather desirous of making his escape; but at a signal from Redgauntlet he advanced, assuming the sheepish look and rustic manner with which the jackanapes covered much acuteness and roguery.

"How long have you been with the party, sirrah?" said Redgauntlet.

"Since the raid on the stake-nets," said Benjie, with his finger in his mouth.

"And what made you follow us?"

"I dauredna stay at hame for the constables," replied the boy.

"And what have you been doing all this time?"

"Doing, sir?—I dinna ken what ye ca' doing; I have been doing

naething," said Benjie; then seeing something in Redgauntlet's eye which was not to be trifled with, he added, "Naething but waiting on Maister Cristal Nixon."

"Hum!—ay—indeed!" muttered Redgauntlet. "Must Master Nixon bring his own retinue into the field? This must be seen to."

He was about to pursue his inquiry, when Nixon himself came to him with looks of anxious haste. "The Father is come," he whispered, "and the gentlemen are getting together in the largest room of the house, and they desire to see you. Yonder is your nephew, too, making a noise like a man in Bedlam."

"I will look to it all instantly," said Redgauntlet. "Is the Father lodged as I directed?"

Cristal nodded.

"Now, then, for the final trial," said Redgauntlet. He folded his hands—looked upwards—crossed himself—and, after this act of devotion (almost the first which any one had observed him make use of), he commanded Nixon to keep good watch—have his horses and men ready for every emergence—look after the safe custody of the prisoners, but treat them at the same time well and civilly. And these orders given, he darted hastily into the house.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

REDGAUNTLET'S first course was to the chamber of his nephew. He unlocked the door, entered the apartment, and asked what he wanted that he made so much noise.

"I want my liberty," said Darsie, who had wrought himself up to a pitch of passion in which his uncle's wrath had lost its terrors. "I desire my liberty, and to be assured of the safety of my beloved friend, Alan Fairford, whose voice I heard but now."

"Your liberty shall be your own within half an hour from this period—your friend shall be also set at freedom in due time—and you yourself be permitted to have access to his place of confinement."

"This does not satisfy me," said Darsie; "I must see my friend instantly; he is here, and he is here endangered on my account only. I have heard violent exclamations—the clash of swords. You will gain no point with me unless I have ocular demonstration of his safety."

"Arthur—dearest nephew," answered Redgauntlet, "drive me not mad! Thine own fate—that of thy house—that of thousands—that of Britain herself—are at this moment in the scales; and you are only occupied about the safety of a poor insignificant pettifogger!"

"He has sustained injury at your hands, then?" said Darsie, fiercely. "I know he has; but if so, not even our relationship shall protect you."

"Peace, ungrateful and obstinate fool!" said Redgauntlet. "Yet

stay—Will you be satisfied if you see this Alan Fairford—the bundle of bombazine—this precious friend of yours—well and sound? Will you, I say, be satisfied with seeing him in perfect safety, without attempting to speak to or converse with him?”—Darsie signified his assent. “Take hold of my arm, then,” said Redgauntlet; “and do you, niece Liliass, take the other; and beware, Sir Arthur, how you bear yourself.”

Darsie was compelled to acquiesce, sufficiently aware that his uncle would permit him no interview with a friend whose influence would certainly be used against his present earnest wishes, and in some measure contented with the assurance of Fairford’s personal safety.

Redgauntlet led them through one or two passages (for the house, as we have before said, was very irregular, and built at different times) until they entered an apartment, where a man with shouldered carabine kept watch at the door, but readily turned the key for their reception. In this room they found Alan Fairford and the Quaker, apparently in deep conversation with each other. They looked up as Redgauntlet and his party entered; and Alan pulled off his hat and made a profound reverence, which the young lady—who recognised him, though, masked as she was, he could not know her—returned with some embarrassment, arising probably from the recollection of the bold step she had taken in visiting him.

Darsie longed to speak, but dared not. His uncle only said, “Gentlemen, I know you are as anxious on Mr Darsie Latimer’s account as he is upon yours. I am commissioned by him to inform you that he is as well as you are. I trust you will all meet soon. Meantime, although I cannot suffer you to be at large, you shall be as well treated as is possible under your temporary confinement.”

He passed on, without pausing to hear the answers which the lawyer and the Quaker were hastening to prefer; and only waving his hand by way of adieu, made his exit, with the real and the seeming lady whom he had under his charge, through a door at the upper end of the apartment, which was fastened and guarded like that by which they entered.

Redgauntlet next led the way into a very small room, adjoining which, but divided by a partition, was one of apparently larger dimensions; for they heard the trampling of the heavy boots of the period, as if several persons were walking to and fro, and conversing in low and anxious whispers.

“Here,” said Redgauntlet to his nephew, as he disencumbered him from the riding-skirt and the mask, “I restore you to yourself, and trust you will lay aside all effeminate thoughts with this feminine dress. Do not blush at having worn a disguise to which kings and heroes have been reduced. It is when female craft or female cowardice find their way into a manly bosom, that he who entertains these sentiments should take eternal shame to himself for thus having resembled womankind. Follow me, while Liliass remains here. I will introduce you to those whom I hope to see associated with you in the most glorious cause that hand ever drew sword in.”

Darsie paused. "Uncle," he said, "my person is in your hands; but remember, my will is my own. I will not be hurried into any resolution of importance. Remember what I have already said—what I now repeat—that I will take no step of importance but upon conviction."

"But canst thou be convinced, thou foolish boy, without hearing and understanding the grounds on which we act?"

So saying, he took Darsie by the arm, and walked with him to the next room—a large apartment, partly filled with miscellaneous articles of commerce, chiefly connected with contraband trade; where, among bales and barrels, sat, or walked to and fro, several gentlemen, whose manners and looks seemed superior to the plain riding-dresses which they wore.

There was a grave and stern anxiety upon their countenances, when, on Redgauntlet's entrance, they drew from their separate coteries into one group around him, and saluted him with a formality which had something in it of ominous melancholy. As Darsie looked around the circle, he thought he could discern in it few traces of that adventurous hope which urges men upon desperate enterprises; and began to believe that the conspiracy would dissolve of itself, without the necessity of his placing himself in direct opposition to so violent a character as his uncle, and incurring the hazard with which such opposition must be attended.

Mr Redgauntlet, however, did not, or would not, see any such marks of depression of spirit amongst his coadjutors, but met them with cheerful countenance, and a warm greeting of welcome. "Happy to meet you here, my lord," he said, bowing low to a slender young man. "I trust you come with the pledges of your noble father, of B—; and all that loyal house.—Sir Richard, what news in the west? I am told you had two hundred men on foot to have joined when the fatal retreat from Derby was commenced. When the White Standard is again displayed, it shall not be turned back so easily, either by the force of its enemies or the falsehood of its friends.—Doctor Grumball, I bow to the representative of Oxford, the mother of learning and loyalty.—Pengwinion, you Cornish chough, has this good wind blown you north?—Ah, my brave Cambro-Britons, when was Wales last in the race of honour?"

Such and suchlike compliments he dealt around, which were in general answered by silent bows; but when he saluted one of his own countrymen by the name of MacKellar, and greeted Maxwell of Summertrees by that of Pate-in-Peril, the latter replied, "that if Pate were not a fool, he would be Pate-in-Safety;" and the former, a thin old gentleman, in tarnished embroidery, said bluntly, "Ay, troth, Redgauntlet, I am here just like yourself; I have little to lose—they that took my land the last time may take my life this; and that is all I care about it."

The English gentlemen, who were still in possession of their paternal estates, looked doubtfully on each other, and there was something whispered among them of the fox which had lost his tail.

Redgauntlet hastened to address them. "I think, my lords and gentlemen," he said, "that I can account for something like sadness

which has crept upon an assembly gathered together for so noble a purpose. Our numbers seem, when thus assembled, too small and inconsiderable to shake the firm-seated usurpation of a half century. But do not count us by what we are in thew and muscle, but by what our summons can do among our countrymen. In this small party are those who have power to raise battalions, and those who have wealth to pay them. And do not believe our friends who are absent are cold or indifferent to the cause. Let us once light the signal, and it will be hailed by all who retain love for the Stewart, and by all—a more numerous body—who hate the Elector. Here I have letters from——”

Sir Richard Glendale interrupted the speaker. “We all confide, Redgauntlet, in your valour and skill—we admire your perseverance; and probably nothing short of your strenuous exertions, and the emulation awakened by your noble and disinterested conduct, could have brought so many of us, the scattered remnant of a disheartened party, to meet together once again in solemn consultation; for I take it, gentlemen,” he said, looking round, “this is only a consultation.”

“Nothing more,” said the young lord.

“Nothing more,” said Doctor Grumball, shaking his large academical peruke.

And, “Only a consultation,” was echoed by the others.

Redgauntlet bit his lip. “I had hopes,” he said, “that the discourses I have held with most of you, from time to time, had ripened into more maturity than your words imply, and that we were here to execute as well as to deliberate; and for this we stand prepared. I can raise five hundred men with my whistle.”

“Five hundred men!” said one of the Welsh squires; “Cot bless us! and pray you, what good could five hundred men do?”

“All that the priming does for the cannon, Mr Meredith,” answered Redgauntlet; “it will enable us to seize Carlisle, and you know what our friends have engaged for in that case.”

“Yes—but,” said the young nobleman, “you must not hurry us on too fast, Mr Redgauntlet; we are all, I believe, as sincere and true-hearted in this business as you are, but we will not be driven forward blindfold. We owe caution to ourselves and our families, as well as to those whom we are empowered to represent on this occasion.”

“Who hurries you, my lord? Who is it that would drive this meeting forward blindfold? I do not understand your lordship,” said Redgauntlet.

“Nay,” said Sir Richard Glendale, “at least do not let us fall under our old reproach of disagreeing among ourselves. What my lord means, Redgauntlet, is, that we have this morning heard it is uncertain whether you could even bring that body of men whom you count upon; your countryman, Mr MacKellar, seemed, just before you came in, to doubt whether your people would rise in any force, unless you could produce the authority of your nephew.”

“I might ask,” said Redgauntlet, “what right MacKellar, or any one, has to doubt my being able to accomplish what I stand pledged for?—But our hopes consist in our unity.—Here stands my nephew.

—Gentlemen, I present to you my kinsman, Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet of that ilk.”

“Gentlemen,” said Darsie, with a throbbing bosom, for he felt the crisis a very painful one, “allow me to say, that I suspend expressing my sentiments on the important subject under discussion until I have heard those of the present meeting.”

“Proceed in your deliberations, gentlemen,” said Redgauntlet; “I will show my nephew such reasons for acquiescing in the result, as will entirely remove any scruples which may hang around his mind.”

Dr Grumball now coughed, “shook his ambrosial curls,” and addressed the assembly.

“The principles of Oxford,” he said, “are well understood, since she was the last to resign herself to the Arch-Usurper,—since she has condemned, by her sovereign authority, the blasphemous, atheistical, and anarchical tenets of Locke, and other deluders of the public mind. Oxford will give men, money, and countenance to the cause of the rightful monarch. But we have been often deluded by foreign powers, who have availed themselves of our zeal to stir up civil dissensions in Britain, not for the advantage of our blessed though banished monarch, but to stir up disturbances by which they might profit, while we, their tools, are sure to be ruined. Oxford, therefore, will not rise, unless our Sovereign comes in person to claim our allegiance, in which case, God forbid we should refuse him our best obedience.”

“It is a very good advice,” said Mr Meredith.

“In troth,” said Sir Richard Glendale, “it is the very keystone of our enterprise, and the only condition upon which I myself and others could ever have dreamt of taking up arms. No insurrection which has not Charles Edward himself at its head, will ever last longer than till a single foot company of redcoats march to disperse it.”

“This is my own opinion, and that of all my family,” said the young nobleman already mentioned; “and I own I am somewhat surprised at being summoned to attend a dangerous rendezvous such as this, before something certain could have been stated to us on this most important preliminary point.”

“Pardon me, my lord,” said Redgauntlet; “I have not been so unjust either to myself or my friends—I had no means of communicating to our distant confederates (without the greatest risk of discovery) what is known to some of my honourable friends. As courageous, and as resolved, as when, twenty years since, he threw himself into the wilds of Moidart, Charles Edward has instantly complied with the wishes of his faithful subjects. Charles Edward is in this country—Charles Edward is in this house!—Charles Edward waits but your present decision, to receive the homage of those who have ever called themselves his loyal liegemen. He that would now turn his coat and change his note, must do so under the eye of his sovereign.”

There was a deep pause. Those among the conspirators whom mere habit, or a desire of preserving consistency, had engaged in

the affair, now saw with terror their retreat cut off; and others, who at a distance had regarded the proposed enterprise as hopeful, trembled when the moment of actually embarking in it was thus unexpectedly and almost inevitably precipitated.

"How now, my lords and gentlemen!" said Redgauntlet; "is it delight and rapture that keep you thus silent? where are the eager welcomes that should be paid your rightful King, who a second time confides his person to the care of his subjects, undeterred by the hairbreadth escapes and severe privations of his former expedition? I hope there is no gentleman here that is not ready to redeem, in his Prince's presence, the pledge of fidelity which he offered in his absence?"

"I, at least," said the young nobleman, resolutely, and laying his hand on his sword, "will not be that coward. If Charles is come to these shores, I will be the first to give him welcome, and to devote my life and fortune to his service."

"Before Cot," said Mr Meredith, "I do not see that Mr Redcuntlet has left us anything else to do."

"Stay," said Summertrees, "there is yet one other question. Has he brought any of those Irish rapparees with him, who broke the neck of our last glorious affair?"

"Not a man of them," said Redgauntlet.

"I trust," said Doctor Grumball, "that there are no Catholic priests in his company. I would not intrude on the private conscience of my Sovereign, but, as an unworthy son of the Church of England, it is my duty to consider her security."

"Not a Popish dog or cat is there, to bark or mew about his Majesty," said Redgauntlet. "Old Shaftesbury himself could not wish a prince's person more secure from Popery—which may not be the worst religion in the world, notwithstanding. Any more doubts, gentlemen? can no more plausible reasons be discovered for postponing the payment of our duty, and discharge of our oaths and engagements? Meantime your King waits your declaration—by my faith he hath but a frozen reception!"

"Redgauntlet," said Sir Richard Glendale, calmly, "your reproaches shall not goad me into anything of which my reason disapproves. That I respect my engagement as much as you do, is evident, since I am here, ready to support it with the best blood in my veins. But has the King really come hither entirely unattended?"

"He has no man with him but young —, as aid-de-camp, and a single valet-de-chambre."

"No *man*;—but, Redgauntlet, as you are a gentleman, has he no woman with him?"

Redgauntlet cast his eyes on the ground and replied, "I am sorry to say—he has."

The company looked at each other, and remained silent for a moment. At length Sir Richard proceeded. "I need not repeat to you, Mr Redgauntlet, what is the well-grounded opinion of his Majesty's friends concerning that most unhappy connection; there is but one sense and feeling amongst us upon the subject. I must con-

clude that our humble remonstrances were communicated by you, sir, to the King?"

"In the same strong terms in which they were couched," replied Redgauntlet. "I love his Majesty's cause more than I fear his displeasure."

"But, apparently, our humble expostulation has produced no effect. This lady, who has crept into his bosom, has a sister in the Elector of Hanover's Court, and yet we are well assured that every point of our most private communication is placed in her keeping."

"*Varium et mutabile semper femina*," said Doctor Grumball.

"She puts his secrets into her work-bag," said Maxwell; "and out they fly whenever she opens it. If I must hang, I would wish it to be in somewhat a better rope than the string of a lady's hussey."

"Are you, too, turning dastard, Maxwell?" said Redgauntlet in a whisper.

"Not I," said Maxwell; "let us fight for it, and let them win and wear us; but to be betrayed by a brimstone like that——"

"Be temperate, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet; the foible of which you complain so heavily has always been that of kings and heroes; which I feel strongly confident the King will surmount, upon the humble entreaty of his best servants, and when he sees them ready to peril their all in his cause, upon the slight condition of his resigning the society of a female favourite, of whom I have seen reason to think he hath been himself for some time wearied. But let us not press upon him rashly with our well-meant zeal. He has a princely will, as becomes his princely birth, and we, gentlemen, who are royalists, should be the last to take advantage of circumstances to limit its exercise. I am as much surprised and hurt as you can be, to find that he has made her the companion of this journey, increasing every chance of treachery and detection. But do not let us insist upon a sacrifice so humiliating, while he has scarce placed a foot upon the beach of his kingdom. Let us act generously by our Sovereign; and when we have shown what we will do for him, we shall be able, with better face, to state what it is we expect him to concede."

"Indeed, I think it is but a pity," said MacKellar, when so many pretty gentlemen are got together, that they should part without the flash of a sword among them."

"I should be of that gentleman's opinion," said Lord ——, "had I nothing to lose but my life; but I frankly own, that the conditions on which my family agreed to join having been, in this instance, left unfulfilled, I will not peril the whole fortunes of our house on the doubtful fidelity of an artful woman."

"I am sorry to see your lordship," said Redgauntlet, "take a course, which is more likely to secure your house's wealth than to augment its honours."

"How am I to understand your language, sir?" said the young nobleman, haughtily.

"Nay, gentlemen," said Dr Grumball, interposing, "do not let friends quarrel; we are all zealous for the cause—but truly, although I know the license claimed by the great in such matters, and can, I

hope, make due allowance, there is, I may say, an indecorum in a prince who comes to claim the allegiance of the Church of England, arriving on such an errand with such a companion—*si non casté, cauté, tamen.*”

“I wonder how the Church of England came to be so heartily attached to his merry old namesake,” said Redgauntlet.

Sir Richard Glendale then took up the question, as one whose authority and experience gave him right to speak with much weight.

“We have no leisure for hesitation,” he said, “it is full time that we decide what course we are to hold. I feel as much as you, Mr Redgauntlet, the delicacy of capitulating with our Sovereign in his present condition. But I must also think of the total ruin of the cause, the confiscation and bloodshed which will take place among his adherents, and all through the infatuation with which he adheres to a woman who is the pensionary of the present minister, as she was for years Sir Robert Walpole’s. Let his Majesty send her back to the Continent, and the sword on which I now lay my hand shall instantly be unsheathed, and, I trust, many hundred others at the same moment.”

The other persons present testified their unanimous acquiescence in what Sir Richard Glendale had said.

“I see you have taken your resolutions, gentlemen,” said Redgauntlet; “unwisely, I think, because I believe that, by softer and more generous proceedings, you would have been more likely to carry a point which I think as desirable as you do. But what is to be done if Charles should refuse, with the inflexibility of his grandfather, to comply with this request of yours? Do you mean to abandon him to his fate?”

“God forbid!” said Sir Richard, hastily; “and God forgive you, Mr Redgauntlet, for breathing such a thought. No! I for one will, with all duty and humility, see him safe back to his vessel, and defend him with my life against whoever shall assail him. But when I have seen his sails spread, my next act will be to secure, if I can, my own safety, by retiring to my house; or, if I find our engagement, as is too probable, has taken wind, by surrendering myself to the next Justice of Peace, and giving security that hereafter I shall live quiet, and submit to the ruling powers.”

Again the rest of the persons present intimated their agreement in opinion with the speaker.

“Well, gentlemen,” said Redgauntlet, “it is not for me to oppose the opinion of every one; and I must do you the justice to say, that the King has, in the present instance, neglected a condition of your agreement which was laid before him in very distinct terms. The question now is, who is to acquaint him with the result of this conference; for I presume you would not wait on him in a body to make the proposal, that he should dismiss a person from his family as the price of your allegiance.”

“I think Mr Regauntlet should make the explanation,” said Lord ——. “As he has, doubtless, done justice to our remonstrances by communicating them to the King, on one can, with such propriety

and force, state the natural and inevitable consequence of their being neglected."

"Now, I think," said Redgauntlet, "that those who make the objection should state it; for I am confident the King will hardly believe, on less authority than that of the heir of the loyal House of B——, that he is the first to seek an evasion of his pledge to join him."

"An evasion, sir!" repeated Lord ——, fiercely. "I have borne too much from you already, and this I will not endure. Favour me with your company to the downs."

Redgauntlet laughed scornfully, and was about to follow the fiery young man, when Sir Richard again interposed. "Are we to exhibit," he said, "the last symptoms of the dissolution of our party, by turning our swords against each other?—Be patient, Lord ——; in such conferences as this, much must pass unquestioned which might brook challenge elsewhere. There is a privilege of party as of parliament—men cannot, in emergency, stand upon picking phrases. —Gentlemen, if you will extend your confidence in me so far, I will wait upon his Majesty, and I hope my Lord —— and Mr Redgauntlet will accompany me. I trust the explanation of this unpleasant matter will prove entirely satisfactory, and that we shall find ourselves at liberty to render our homage to our Sovereign without reserve, when I for one will be the first to peril all in his just quarrel."

Redgauntlet at once stepped forward. "My lord," he said, "if my zeal made me say anything in the slightest degree offensive, I wish it unsaid, and ask your pardon. A gentleman can do no more."

"I could not have asked Mr Redgauntlet to do so much," said the young nobleman, willingly accepting the hand which Redgauntlet offered. "I know no man living from whom I could take so much reproof without a sense of degradation, as from himself."

"Let me then hope, my lord, that you will go with Sir Richard and me to the presence. Your warm blood will heat our zeal—our colder resolves will temper yours."

The young lord smiled, and shook his head. "Alas! Mr Redgauntlet," he said, "I am ashamed to say, that in zeal you surpass us all. But I will not refuse this mission, provided you will permit Sir Arthur, your nephew, also to accompany us."

"My nephew?" said Redgauntlet, and seemed to hesitate, then added, "Most certainly.—I trust," he said, looking at Darsie, "he will bring to his Prince's presence such sentiments as fit the occasion."

It seemed however to Darsie, that his uncle would rather have left him behind, had he not feared that he might in that case have been influenced by, or might perhaps himself influence, the unresolved confederates with whom he must have associated during his absence.

"I will go," said Redgauntlet, "and request admission."

In a moment after he returned, and without speaking, motioned for the young nobleman to advance. He did so, followed by Sir Richard Glendale and Darsie, Redgauntlet himself bringing up the rear. A short passage, and a few steps, brought them to the door of the temporary presence-chamber, in which the Royal Wanderer was

to receive their homage. It was the upper loft of one of those cottages which made additions to the old inn, poorly furnished, dusty, and in disorder; for rash as the enterprise might be considered, they had been still careful not to draw the attention of strangers by any particular attentions to the personal accommodation of the Prince. He was seated, when the deputies, as they might be termed, of his remaining adherents entered; and as he rose, and came forward and bowed, in acceptance of their salutation, it was with a dignified courtesy which at once supplied whatever was deficient in external pomp, and converted the wretched garret into a saloon worthy of the occasion.

It is needless to add, that he was the same personage already introduced in the character of Father Buonaventure, by which name he was distinguished at Fairladies. His dress was not different from what he then wore, excepting that he had a loose riding-coat of camlet, under which he carried an efficient cut-and-thrust sword, instead of his walking rapier, and also a pair of pistols.

Redgauntlet presented to him successively the young Lord —, and his kinsman, Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet, who trembled as, bowing and kissing his hand, he found himself surprised into what might be construed an act of high treason, which yet he saw no safe means to avoid.

Sir Richard Glendale seemed personally known to Charles Edward, who received him with a mixture of dignity and affection, and seemed to sympathise with the tears which rushed into that gentleman's eyes as he bade his Majesty welcome to his native kingdom.

"Yes, my good Sir Richard," said the unfortunate Prince in a tone melancholy, yet resolved, "Charles Edward is with his faithful friends once more—not, perhaps, with his former gay hopes which undervalued danger, but with the same determined contempt of the worst which can befall him, in claiming his own rights and those of his country."

"I rejoice, sire—and yet, alas! I must also grieve to see you once more on the British shores," said Sir Richard Glendale, and stopped short—a tumult of contradictory feelings preventing his farther utterance.

"It is the call of my faithful and suffering people which alone could have induced me to take once more the sword in my hand. For my own part, Sir Richard, when I have reflected how many of my loyal and devoted friends perished by the sword and by proscription, or died indigent and neglected in a foreign land, I have often sworn that no view to my personal aggrandisement should again induce me to agitate a title which has cost my followers so dear. But since so many men of worth and honour conceive the cause of England and Scotland to be linked with that of Charles Stewart, I must follow their brave example, and, laying aside all other considerations, once more stand forward as their deliverer. I am, however, come hither upon your invitation; and as you are so completely acquainted with circumstances to which my absence must necessarily have rendered me a stranger, I must be a mere tool in the hands of my friends. I know well I never can refer myself implicitly to more loyal hearts or

wiser heads, than Herries Redgauntlet, and Sir Richard Glendale. Give me your advice, then, how we are to proceed, and decide upon the fate of Charles Edward."

Redgauntlet looked at Richard, as if to say, "Can you press any additional or unpleasant condition at a moment like this?" And the other shook his head and looked down, as if his resolution was unaltered, and yet as feeling all the delicacy of the situation.

There was a silence, which was broken by the unfortunate representative of an unhappy dynasty, with some appearance of irritation. "This is strange, gentlemen," he said; "you have sent for me from the bosom of my family, to head an adventure of doubt and danger; and when I come your own minds seem to be still irresolute. I had not expected this on the part of two such men."

"For me, sire," said Redgauntlet, "the steel of my sword is not truer than the temper of my mind."

"My Lord ——'s and mine are equally so," said Sir Richard; "but you had in charge, Mr Redgauntlet, to convey our request to his majesty, coupled with certain conditions."

"And I discharged my duty to his Majesty and to you," said Redgauntlet.

"I looked at no condition, gentlemen," said their King, with dignity, "save that which called me here to assert my rights in person. *That* I have fulfilled at no common risk. Here I stand to keep my word, and I expect of you to be true to yours."

"There was, or should have been, something more than that in our proposal, please your Majesty," said Sir Richard. "There was a condition annexed to it."

"I saw it not," said Charles, interrupting him. "Out of tenderness towards the noble hearts of whom I think so highly, I would neither see nor read anything which could lessen them in my love and my esteem. Conditions can have no part betwixt Prince and subject."

"Sire," said Redgauntlet, kneeling on one knee, "I see from Sir Richard's countenance he deems it my fault that your Majesty seems ignorant of what your subjects desired that I should communicate to your Majesty. For Heaven's sake! for the sake of all my past services and sufferings, leave not such a stain upon my honour! The note, Number D., of which this is a copy, referred to the painful subject to which Sir Richard again directs your attention."

"You press upon me, gentlemen," said the Prince, colouring highly, "recollections, which, as I hold them most alien to your character, I would willingly have banished from my memory. I did not suppose that my loyal subjects would think so poorly of me, as to use my depressed circumstances as a reason for forcing themselves into my domestic privacies, and stipulating arrangements with their King regarding matters, in which the meanest hinds claim the privilege of thinking for themselves. In affairs of state and public policy, I will ever be guided as becomes a prince, by the advice of my wisest counsellors; in those which regard my private affections, and my domestic arrangements, I claim the same freedom of will which I allow to all my subjects, and without which a crown were less worth wearing than a beggar's bonnet."

"May it please your Majesty," said Sir Richard Glendale, "I see it must be my lot to speak unwilling truths; but believe me, I do so with as much profound respect as deep regret. It is true, we have called you to head a mighty undertaking, and that your Majesty, preferring honour to safety, and the love of your country to your own ease, has condescended to become our leader. But we also pointed out as a necessary and indispensable preparatory step to the achievement of our purpose—and, I must say, as a positive condition of our engaging in it—that an individual supposed,—I presume not to guess how truly,—to have your Majesty's more intimate confidence, and believed, I will not say on absolute proof, but upon the most pregnant suspicion, to be capable of betraying that confidence to the Elector of Hanover, should be removed from your royal household and society."

"This is too insolent, Sir Richard!" said Charles Edward. "Have you inveigled me into your power to bait me in this unseen manner?—And you, Redgauntlet, why did you suffer matters to come to such a point as this, without making me more distinctly aware what insults were to be practised on me?"

"My gracious Prince," said Redgauntlet, "I am so far to blame in this, that I did not think so slight an impediment as that of a woman's society could have really interrupted an undertaking of this magnitude. I am a plain man, sire, and speak but bluntly; I could not have dreamt but what, within the first five minutes of this interview, either Sir Richard and his friends would have ceased to insist upon a condition so ungrateful to your Majesty, or that your Majesty would have sacrificed this unhappy attachment to the sound advice, or even to the over-anxious suspicions, of so many faithful subjects. I saw no entanglement in such a difficulty, which on either side might not have been broken through like a cobweb."

"You were mistaken, sir," said Charles Edward, "entirely mistaken—as much so you are at this moment, when you think in your heart my refusal to comply with this insolent proposition is dictated by a childish and romantic passion for an individual. I tell you, sir, I could part with that person to-morrow, without an instant's regret—that I have had thoughts of dismissing her from my court, for reasons known to myself; but that I will never betray my rights as a sovereign and a man, by taking this step to secure the favour of any one, or to purchase that allegiance which, if you owe it to me at all, is due to me as my birthright."

"I am sorry for this," said Redgauntlet; "I hope both your Majesty and Sir Richard will reconsider your resolutions, or forbear this discussion, in a conjuncture so pressing. I trust your Majesty will recollect that you are on hostile ground; that our preparations cannot have so far escaped notice as to permit us now with safety to retreat from our purpose; insomuch, that it is with the deepest anxiety of heart I foresee even danger to your own royal person, unless you can generously give your subjects the satisfaction, which Sir Richard seems to think they are obstinate in demanding."

"And deep indeed your anxiety ought to be," said the Prince. "Is it in these circumstances of personal danger in which you expect to overcome a resolution, which is founded on a sense of what is due to

me as a man or a prince? If the axe and scaffold were ready before the windows of Whitehall, I would rather tread the same path with my great-grandfather, than concede the slightest point in which my honour is concerned."

He spoke these words with a determined accent, and looked around him on the company, all of whom (excepting Darsie, who saw, he thought, a fair period to a most perilous enterprise) seemed in deep anxiety and confusion. At length, Sir Richard spoke in a solemn and melancholy tone.

"If the safety," he said, "of poor Richard Glendale were alone concerned in this matter, I have never valued my life enough to weigh it against the slightest point of your Majesty's service. But I am only a messenger—a commissioner, who must execute my trust, and upon whom a thousand voices will cry, Curse and wo, if I do it not with fidelity. All of your adherents, even Redgauntlet himself, see certain ruin to this enterprise—the greatest danger to your Majesty's person—the utter destruction of all your party and friends, if they insist not on the point, which, unfortunately, your Majesty is so unwilling to concede. I speak it with a heart full of anguish—with a tongue unable to utter my emotions—but it must be spoken—the fatal truth—that if your royal goodness cannot yield to us a boon which we hold necessary to our security and your own, your Majesty with one word disarms ten thousand men, ready to draw their swords in your behalf; or, to speak yet more plainly, you annihilate even the semblance of a royal party in Great Britain."

"And why do you not add," said the Prince, scornfully, "that the men who have been ready to assume arms in my behalf, will atone for their treason to the Elector, by delivering me up to the fate for which so many proclamations have destined me? Carry my head to St James's, gentlemen; you will do a more acceptable and a more honourable action, than, having inveigled me into a situation which places me so completely in your power, to dishonour yourselves by propositions which dishonour me."

"My God, sire!" exclaimed Sir Richard, clasping his hands together, in impatience, "of what great and inexpressible crime can your Majesty's ancestors have been guilty, that they have been punished by the infliction of judicial blindness on their whole generation!—Come, my Lord —, we must to our friends."

"By your leave, Sir Richard," said the young nobleman, "not till we have learned what measures can be taken for his Majesty's personal safety."

"Care not for me, young man," said Charles Edward; "when I was in the society of Highland robbers and cattle-drovers, I was safer than I now hold myself among the representatives of the best blood in England.—Farewell, gentleman—I will shift for myself."

"This must never be," said Redgauntlet. "Let me that brought you to the point of danger, at least provide for your safe retreat."

So saying, he hastily left the apartment, followed by his nephew. The Wanderer, averting his eyes from Lord — and Sir Richard Glendale, threw himself into a seat at the upper end of the apart-

ment, while they, in much anxiety, stood together, at a distance from him, and conversed in whispers.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

WHEN Redgauntlet left the room, in haste and discomposure, the first person he met on the stair, and indeed so close by the door of the apartment that Darsie thought he must have been listening here, was his attendant Nixon.

"What the devil do you here?" he said, abruptly and sternly.

"I wait your orders," said Nixon. "I hope all's right!—excuse my zeal."

"All is wrong, sir—Where is the seafaring fellow—Ewart—what do you call him?"

"Nanty Ewart, sir—I will carry your commands," said Nixon.

"I will deliver them myself to him," said Redgauntlet; "call him hither."

"But should your honour leave the presence?" said Nixon, still lingering.

"Sdeath, sir, do you prate to me?" said Redgauntlet, bending his brows. "I, sir, transact my own business; you, I am told, act by a ragged deputy."

Without farther answer, Nixon departed, rather disconcerted, as it seemed to Darsie.

"That dog turns insolent and lazy," said Redgauntlet; but I must bear with him for a while."

A moment after, Nixon returned with Ewart.

"Is this the smuggling fellow?" demanded Redgauntlet.

Nixon nodded.

"Is he sober now?—he was brawling anon."

"Sober enough for business," said Nixon.

"Well then, hark ye, Ewart—man your boat with your best hands, and have her by the pier—get your other fellows on board the brig— if you have any cargo left, throw it overboard; it shall be all paid, five times over—and be ready for a start to Wales or the Hebrides, or perhaps for Sweden or Norway."

Ewart answered sullenly enough, "Ay, ay, sir."

"Go with him, Nixon," said Redgauntlet, forcing himself to speak with some appearance of cordiality to the servant with whom he was offended; "see he does his duty."

Ewart left the house sullenly, followed by Nixon. The sailor was just in that species of drunken humour which made him jealous, passionate, and troublesome, without showing any other disorder than that of irritability. As he walked towards the beach he kept muttering to himself, but in such a tone that his companion lost not a word, "Smuggling fellow—Ay, smuggler—and, start your cargo into the

sea—and be ready to start for the Hebrides, or Sweden—or the devil, I suppose. Well, and what if I said in answer—Rebel, Jacobite—traitor—I'll make you and your d—d confederates walk the plank—I have seen better men do it—half-a-score of a morning—when I was across the Line.”

“D—d unhandsome terms those Redgauntlet used to you brother,” said Nixon.

“Which do you mean?” said Ewart, starting, and recollecting himself. “I have been at my old trade of thinking aloud, have I?”

“No matter,” answered Nixon, “none but a friend heard you. You cannot have forgotten how Redgauntlet disarmed you this morning.”

“Why, I would bear no malice about that—only he is so cursedly high and saucy,” said Ewart.

“And then,” said Nixon, “I know you for a true hearted Protestant.”

“That I am, by G—,” said Ewart. “No, the Spaniards could never get my religion from me.”

“And a friend to King George, and the Hanover line of succession,” said Nixon, still walking and speaking very slow.

“You may swear I am, excepting in the way of business, as Turnpenny says. I like King George, but I can't afford to pay duties.”

“You are outlawed, I believe?” said Nixon.

“Am I?—faith, I believe I am,” said Ewart. “I wish I were *inlaved* again with all my heart—But come along, we must get all ready for our peremptory gentleman, I suppose.”

“I will teach you a better trick,” said Nixon. “There is a bloody pack of rebels yonder.”

“Ay, we all know that,” said the smuggler; “but the snowball's melting, I think.”

“There is some one yonder whose head is worth—thirty—thousand—pounds—of sterling money,” said Nixon, pausing between each word, as if to enforce the magnificence of the sum.

“And what of that?” said Ewart, quickly.

“Only that instead of lying by the pier with your men on their oars, if you will just carry your boat on board just now, and take no notice of any signal from the shore, by G—d, Nanty Ewart, I will make a man of you for life!”

“Oh ho! then the Jacobite gentry are not so safe as they think themselves?” said Nanty.

“In an hour or two,” replied Nixon, “they will be made safer in Carlisle Castle.”

“The devil they will!” said Ewart; “and you have been the informer, I suppose?”

“Yes; I have been ill paid for my service among the Redgauntlets—have scarce got dog's wages—and been treated worse than ever dog was used. I have the old fox and his cubs in the same trap now, Nanty; and we'll see how a certain young lady will look then. You see I am frank with you, Nanty.”

“And I will be as frank with you,” said the smuggler. “You

are a d—d old scoundrel—traitor to the man whose bread you eat! Me help to betray poor devils, that have been so often betrayed myself!—Not if they were a hundred Popes, Devils, and Pretenders. I will back and tell them their danger—they are part of cargo—regularly invoiced—put under my charge by the owners—I'll back——”

“You are not stark mad?” said Nixon, who now saw he had miscalculated in supposing Nanty's wild ideas of honour and fidelity could be shaken even by resentment, or by his Protestant partialities. “You shall not go back—it is all a joke.”

“I'll back to Redgauntlet, and see whether it is a joke he will laugh at.”

“My life is lost if you do,” said Nixon—“hear reason.”

They were in a clump or cluster of tall furze at the moment they were speaking, about half-way between the pier and the house, but not in a direct line, from which Nixon, whose object it was to gain time, had induced Ewart to diverge insensibly.

He now saw the necessity of taking a desperate resolution. “Hear reason,” he said; and added, as Nanty still endeavoured to pass him, “Or else hear this!” discharging a pocket-pistol into the unfortunate man's body.

Nanty staggered, but kept his feet. “It has cut my back-bone asunder,” he said; “you have done me the last good office, and I will not die ungrateful.”

As he uttered the last words, he collected his remaining strength, stood firm for an instant, drew his hanger, and, fetching a stroke with both hands, cut Cristal Nixon down. The blow, struck with all the energy of a desperate and dying man, exhibited a force to which Ewart's exhausted frame might have seemed inadequate;—it cleft the hat which the wretch wore, though secured by a plate of iron within the lining, bit deep into his skull, and there left a fragment of the weapon, which was broken by the fury of the blow.

One of the seamen of the lugger, who strolled up, attracted by the firing of the pistol, though, being a small one, the report was very trifling, found both the unfortunate men stark dead. Alarmed at what he saw, which he conceived to have been the consequence of some unsuccessful engagement betwixt his late commander and a revenue officer (for Nixon chanced not to be personally known to him), the sailor hastened back to the boat, in order to apprise his comrades of Nanty's fate, and to advise them to take off themselves and the vessel.

Meantime Redgauntlet, having, as we have seen, despatched Nixon for the purpose of securing a retreat for the unfortunate Charles, in case of extremity, returned to the apartment where he had left the Wanderer. He now found him alone.

“Sir Richard Glendale,” said the unfortunate prince, “with his young friend, has gone to consult their adherents now in the house. Redgauntlet, my friend, I will not blame you for the circumstances in which I find myself, though I am at once placed in danger, and rendered contemptible. But you ought to have stated to me more strongly the weight which these gentlemen attached to their insolent

proposition. You should have told me that no compromise would have any effect—that they desire not a Prince to govern them, but one, on the contrary, over whom they were to exercise restraint on all occasions, from the highest affairs of the state down to the most intimate and private concerns of his own privacy, which the most ordinary men desire to keep secret and sacred from interference.”

“God knows,” said Redgauntlet, in much agitation, “I acted for the best when I pressed your Majesty to come hither—I never thought that your Majesty, at such a crisis, would have scrupled, when a kingdom was in view, to sacrifice an attachment which——”

“Peace, sir!” said Charles; “it is not for you to estimate my feelings upon such a subject.”

Redgauntlet coloured high, and bowed profoundly. “At least,” he resumed, “I hoped that some middle way might be found, and it shall—and must—Come with me, nephew. We will to these gentlemen, and I am confident I will bring back heart-stirring tidings.”

“I will do much to comply with them, Redgauntlet. I am loath, having again set my foot on British land, to quit it without a blow for my right. But this which they demand of me is a degradation, and compliance is impossible.”

Redgauntlet, followed by his nephew, the unwilling spectator of this extraordinary scene, left once more the apartment of the adventurous Wanderer, and was met on the top of the stairs by Joe Crackenthorp. “Where are the other gentlemen?” he said.

“Yonder in the west barrack,” answered Joe; “but, Master Ingoldsby,”—that was the name by which Redgauntlet was most generally known in Cumberland,—“I wish to say to you that I must put yonder folk together in one room.”

“What folk?” said Redgauntlet, impatiently.

“Why, them prisoner stranger folk, as you bid Cristal Nixon look after. Lord love you! this is a large house enow, but we cannot have separate lock-ups for folk, as they have in Newgate or in Bedlam. Yonder’s a mad beggar, that is to be a great man when he wins a lawsuit, Lord help him!—Yonder’s a Quaker and a lawyer charged with a riot; and, ecod, I must make one key and one lock keep them, for we are chokeful, and you have sent off old Nixon, that could have given one some help in this confusion. Besides, they take up every one a room, and call for noughts on earth,—excepting the old man, who calls lustily enough,—but he has not a penny to pay shot.”

“Do as thou wilt with them,” said Redgauntlet, who had listened impatiently to his statement; “so thou dost but keep them from getting out and making some alarm in the country, I care not.”

“A Quaker and a lawyer!” said Darsie. “This must be Fairford and Geddes.—Uncle, I must request of you——”

“Nay, nephew,” interrupted Redgauntlet, “this is no time for asking questions. You shall yourself decide upon their fate in the course of an hour—no harm whatever is designed them.”

So saying, he hurried towards the place where the Jacobite gentlemen were holding their council, and Darsie followed him, in the hope that the obstacle which had arisen to the prosecution of their des-

perate adventure would prove unsurmountable, and spare him the necessity of a dangerous and violent rupture with his uncle. The discussions among them were very eager; the more daring part of the conspirators, who had little but life to lose, being desirous to proceed at all hazards; while the others, whom a sense of honour and a hesitation to disavow long-cherished principles had brought forward, were perhaps not ill satisfied to have a fair apology for declining an adventure, into which they had entered with more of reluctance than zeal.

Meanwhile, Joe Crackenthorp, availing himself of the hasty permission attained from Redgauntlet, proceeded to assemble in one apartment those whose safe custody had been thought necessary; and without much considering the propriety of the matter, he selected for the common place of confinement, the room which Lilius had, since her brother's departure, occupied alone. It had a strong lock, and was double-hinged, which probably led to the preference assigned to it as a place of security.

Into this, Joe, with little ceremony, and a good deal of noise, introduced the Quaker and Fairford; the first descanting on the immorality, the other on the illegality, of his proceedings; and he turned a deaf ear both to the one and the other. Next he pushed in, almost in headlong fashion, the unfortunate litigant, who, having made some resistance at the threshold, had received a violent thrust in consequence, came rushing forward, like a ram in the act of charging, with such impetus, as must have carried him to the top of the room, and struck the cocked hat which sat perched on the top of his tow wig against Miss Redgauntlet's person, had not the honest Quaker interrupted his career by seizing him by the collar, and bringing him to a stand. "Friend," said he, with the real good-breeding which so often subsists independently of ceremonial "thou art no company for that young person; she is, thou seest, frightened at our being so suddenly thrust in hither; and although that be no fault of ours, yet it will become us to behave civilly towards her. Wherefore come thou with me to this window, and I will tell thee what it concerns thee to know."

"And what for should I no speak to the leddy, friend?" said Peter, who was now about half seas over. "I have spoke to leddies before now, man—What for should she be frightened at me?—I am nae bogle, I ween.—What are ye pooin' me that gate for?—Ye will rive my coat, and I will have a good action for having myself made *sartum atque tectum* at your expenses."

Notwithstanding this threat, Mr Geddes, whose muscles were as strong as his judgment was sound and his temper sedate, led Poor Peter, under the sense of a control against which he could not struggle, to the farther corner of the apartment, where, placing him, whether he would or no, in a chair, he sat down beside him, and effectually prevented his annoying the young lady, upon whom he had seemed bent on conferring the delights of his society.

If Peter had immediately recognised his counsel learned in the law, it is probable that not even the benevolent efforts of the Quaker could have kept him in a state of restraint; but Fairford's back was

turned towards his client, whose optics, besides being somewhat dazzled with ale and brandy, were speedily engaged in contemplating a half-crown which Joshua held between his finger and his thumb, saying, at the same time, "Friend, thou art indigent and improvident. This will, well employed, procure thee sustentation of nature for more than a single day; and I will bestow it on thee if thou wilt sit here and keep me company; for neither thou nor I, friend, are fit company for ladies."

"Speak for yourself, friend," said Peter, scornfully; "I was aye kend to be agreeable to the fair sex; and when I was in business I served the leddies wi' anither sort of decorum than Plainstones, the d—d awkward scoundrel! It was one of the articles of dittay between us."

"Well, but, friend," said the Quaker, who observed that the young lady still seemed to fear Peter's intrusion, "I wish to hear thee speak about this great lawsuit of thine, which has been matter of such celebrity."

"Celebrity!—Ye may swear that," said Peter, for the string was touched to which his crazy imagination always vibrated. "And I dinna wonder that folk that judge things by their outward grandeur, should think me something worth their envying. It's very true that it is grandeur upon earth to hear ane's name thunnered out along the long-arched roof of the Outer-House,— '*Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstones, et per contra*;' a' the best lawyers in the house fleeing like eagles to the prey; some because they are in the cause, and some because they want to be thought engaged (for there are tricks in other trades by selling muslins)—to see the reporters mending their pens to take down the debate—the Lords themselves pooin' in their chairs, like folk sitting down to a gude dinner, and crying on the clerks for parts and pendicles of the process, who, puir bodies, can do little mair than cry on their closet-keepers to help them. To see a' this," continued Peter, in a tone of sustained rapture, "and to ken that naething will be said or dune amang a' thae grand folk, for maybe the feck of three hours, saving what concerns you and your business—Oh, man, nae wonder that ye judge this to be earthly glory!—And yet, neighbour, as I was saying, there be unco drawbacks—I whiles think of my bit house, where dinner, and supper, and breakfast, used to come without the crying for, just as if fairies had brought it—and the gude bed at e'en—and the needfu' penny in the pouch.—And then to see a' ane's warldly substance capering in the air in a pair of weigh-bauks, now up, now down, as the breath of judge or counsel inclines it for pursuer or defender,—troth, man, there are times I rue having ever begun the plea wark, though, maybe, when ye consider the renown and credit I have by it, ye will hardly believe what I am saying."

"Indeed, friend," said Joshua, with a sigh, "I am glad thou hast found anything in the legal contention which compensates thee for poverty and hunger; but I believe, were other human objects of ambition looked upon as closely, their advantages would be found as chimerical as those attending thy protracted litigation."

"But never mind, friend," said Peter, "I'll tell you the exact state

of the conjunct processes, and make you sensible that I can bring myself round with a wet finger, now I have my finger and my thumb on this loup-the-dike loon, the lad Fairford."

Alan Fairford was in the act of speaking to the masked lady (for Miss Redgauntlet had retained her riding vizard), endeavouring to assure her, as he perceived her anxiety, of such protection as he could afford, when his own name, pronounced in a loud tone, attracted his attention. He looked round, and seeing Peter Peebles, as hastily turned to avoid his notice, in which he succeeded, so earnest was Peter upon his colloquy with one of the most respectable auditors whose attention he had ever been able to engage. And by this little motion, momentary as it was, Alan gained an unexpected advantage; for while he looked round, Miss Lillias, I could never ascertain why, took the moment to adjust her mask, and did it so awkwardly, that when her companion again turned his head, he recognised as much of her features as authorised him to address her as his fair client, and to press his offers of protection and assistance with the boldness of a former acquaintance.

Lillias Redgauntlet withdrew the mask from her crimsoned cheek. "Mr Fairford," she said, in a voice almost inaudible, "you have the character of a young gentleman of sense and generosity; but we have already met in one situation which you must think singular; and I must be exposed to misconception, at least, for my forwardness, were it not in a cause in which my dearest affections were concerned."

"Any interest in my beloved friend Darsie Latimer," said Fairford, stepping a little back, and putting a marked restraint upon his former advances, "gives me a double right to be useful to——" He stopped short.

"To his sister, your goodness would say," answered Lillias.

"His sister, madam!" replied Alan, in the extremity of astonishment—"Sister, I presume, in affection only?"

"No, sir; my dear brother Darsie and I are connected by the bonds of actual relationship; and I am not sorry to be the first to tell this to the friend he most values."

Fairford's first thought was on the violent passion which Darsie had expressed towards the fair unknown. "Good God!" he exclaimed, "how did he bear the discovery?"

"With resignation, I hope," said Lillias, smiling. "A more accomplished sister he might easily have come by, but scarcely could have found one who could love him more than I do."

"I meant—I only meant to say," said the young counsellor, his presence of mind failing him for an instant—"that is, I meant to ask where Darsie Latimer is at this moment."

"In this very house, and under the guardianship of his uncle, whom I believe you knew as a visitor of your father, under the name of Mr Herries of Birrenswork."

"Let me hasten to him," said Fairford; "I have sought him through difficulties and dangers—I must see him instantly."

"You forget you are a prisoner," said the young lady.

"True—true; but I cannot be long detained—the cause alleged is too ridiculous."

"Alas!" said Lilius, "our fate—my brother's and mine, at least—must turn on the deliberations perhaps of less than an hour.—For you, sir, I believe and apprehend nothing but some restraint; my uncle is neither cruel nor unjust, though few will go farther in the cause which he has adopted."

"Which is that of the Pretend—"

"For God's sake speak lower!" said Lilius, approaching her hand, as if to stop him. "The word may cost you your life. You do not know—indeed you do not—the terrors of the situation in which we at present stand, and in which I fear you also are involved by your friendship for my brother."

"I do not indeed know the particulars of our situation," said Fairford; "but be the danger what it may, I shall not grudge my share of it for the sake of my friend; or," he added, with more timidity, "of my friend's sister. Let me hope," he said, "my dear Miss Latimer, that my presence may be of some use to you; and that it may be so, let me entreat a share of your confidence, which I am conscious I have otherwise no right to ask."

He led her, as he spoke, towards the recess of the farther window of the room, and observing to her that, unhappily, he was particularly exposed to interruption from the mad old man whose entrance had alarmed her, he disposed of Darsie Latimer's riding skirt, which had been left in the apartment, over the back of two chairs, forming thus a sort of screen, behind which he ensconced himself with the maiden of the green mantle; feeling at the moment, that the danger in which he was placed was almost compensated by the intelligence which permitted those feelings towards her to revive, which justice to his friend had induced him to stifle in the birth.

The relative situation of adviser and advised, of protector and protected, is so peculiarly suited to the respective condition of man and woman, that great progress towards intimacy is often made in very short space; for the circumstances call for confidence on the part of the gentleman, and forbid coyness on that of the lady, so that the usual barriers against easy intercourse are at once thrown down.

Under these circumstances, securing themselves as far as possible from observation, conversing in whispers, and seated in a corner, where they were brought into so close contact that their faces nearly touched each other, Fairford heard from Lilius Redgauntlet the history of her family, particularly of her uncle; his views upon her brother, and the agony which she felt, lest at that very moment he might succeed in engaging Darsie in some desperate scheme, fatal to his fortune, and perhaps to his life.

Alan Fairford's acute understanding instantly connected what he had heard with the circumstances he had witnessed at Fairladies. His first thought was, to attempt, at all risks, his instant escape, and procure assistance powerful enough to crush, in the very cradle, a conspiracy of such a determined character. This he did not consider as difficult; for, though the door was guarded on the outside, the window, which was not above ten feet from the ground, was open for escape, the common on which it looked was unenclosed, and profusely covered with furze. There would, he thought, be little diffi-

culty in effecting his liberty and in concealing his course after he had gained it.

But Lillas exclaimed against this scheme. Her uncle, she said, was a man, who, in his moments of enthusiasm, knew neither remorse nor fear. He was capable of visiting upon Darsie any injury which he might conceive Fairford had rendered him—he was her near kinsman also, and not an unkind one, and she deprecated any effort, even in her brother's favour, by which his life must be exposed to danger. Fairford himself remembered Father Buonaventure, and made little question but that he was one of the sons of the old Chevalier de Saint George; and with feelings which, although contradictory of his public duty, can hardly be much censured, his heart recoiled from being the agent by whom the last scion of such a long line of Scottish Princes should be rooted up. He then thought of obtaining an audience, if possible, of this devoted person, and explaining to him the utter hopelessness of his undertaking, which he judged it likely that the ardour of his partisans might have concealed from him. But he relinquished this design as soon as formed. He had no doubt, that any light which he could throw on the state of the country, would come too late to be serviceable to one who was always reported to have his own full share of the hereditary obstinacy which had cost his ancestors so dear, and who, in drawing the sword, must have thrown from him the scabbard.

Lillas suggested the advice which, of all others, seemed most suited to the occasion, that, yielding, namely, to the circumstances of their situation, they should watch carefully when Darsie should obtain any degree of freedom, and endeavour to open a communication with him, in which case their joint flight might be effected, and without endangering the safety of any one.

Their youthful deliberation had nearly fixed in this point, when Fairford, who was listening to the low sweet whispering tones of Lillas Redgauntlet, rendered yet more interesting by some slight touch of foreign accent, was startled by a heavy hand which descended with full weight on his shoulder, while the discordant voice of Peter Peebles, who had at length broken loose from the well-meaning Quaker, exclaimed in the ear of his truant counsel—"Aha, lad! I think ye are catched—An' so ye are turned chamber-counsel, are ye?—And ye have drawn up wi' clients in scarfs and hoods? But bide a wee, billie, and see if I dinna sort ye when my petition and complaint comes to be discussed, with, or without answers, under certification."

Alan Fairford had never more difficulty in his life to subdue a first emotion, than he had to refrain from knocking down the crazy blockhead who had broke in upon him at such a moment. But the length of Peter's address gave him time, fortunately perhaps for both parties, to reflect on the extreme irregularity of such a proceeding. He stood silent, however, with vexation, while Peter went on.

"Weel, my bonnie man, I see ye are thinking shame o' yoursell, and nae great wonder. Ye maun leave this quean—the like of her is ower light company for you. I have heard honest Mr Pest say, that the gown grees ill wi' the petticoat. But come awa hame to

your puir father, and I'll take care of you the hail gate, and keep you company, and deil a word we will speak about, but just the state of the conjoined processes of the great cause of Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstones."

"If thou canst endure to hear as much of that suit, friend," said the Quaker, "as I have heard out of mere compassion for thee, I think verily thou wilt soon be at the bottom of the matter, unless it be altogether bottomless."

Fairford shook off, rather indignantly, the large bony hand which Peter had imposed upon his shoulder, and was about to say something peevish, upon so unpleasant and insolent a mode of interruption, when the door opened, a treble voice saying to the sentinel, "I tell you I maun be in to see if Mr Nixon's here;" and little Benjie thrust in his mop-head and keen black eyes. Ere he could withdraw it, Peter Peebles sprang to the door, seized on the boy by the collar, and dragged him forward into the room.

"Let me see it," he said, "ye ne'er-do-weel limb of Satan—I'll gar you satisfy the production, I trow—I'll hae first and second diligence against you, ye deevil's buckie!"

"What dost thou want?" said the Quaker, interfering; "why dost thou frighten the boy, friend Peebles?"

"I gave the bastard a penny to buy me snuff," said the pauper; "and he has rendered no account of his intromissions; but I'll gar him as gude."

So saying, he proceeded forcibly to rifle the pockets of Benjie's ragged jacket of one or two snares for game, marbles, a half-bitten apple, two stolen eggs (one of which Peter broke in the eagerness of his research), and various other unconsidered trifles, which had not the air of being very honestly come by. The little rascal, under this discipline, bit and struggled like a fox-cub, but, like that vermin, uttered neither cry nor complaint, till a note, which Peter tore from his bosom, flew as far as Liliast Redgauntlet, and fell at her feet. It was addressed to C. N.

"It is for the villain Nixon," she said to Alan Fairford; "open it without scruple; that boy is his emissary; we shall now see what the miscreant is driving at."

Little Benjie now gave up all farther struggle, and suffered Peebles to take from him, without resistance, a shilling, out of which Peter declared he would pay himself, principal and interest, and account for the balance. The boy, whose attention seemed fixed on something very different, only said, "Maister Nixon will murder me!"

Alan Fairford did not hesitate to read the little scrap of paper, on which was written, "All is prepared—keep them in play until I come up—You may depend on your reward.—C. C."

"Alas, my uncle—my poor uncle!" said Liliast; "this is the result of his confidence. Methinks, to give him instant notice of his confidant's treachery, is now the best service we can render all concerned—if they break up their undertaking, as they must now do, Darsie will be at liberty."

In the same breath, they were both at the half-opened door of the room, Fairford entreating to speak with the Father Buonaventure,

and Liliás, equally vehemently, requesting a moment's interview with her uncle. While the sentinel hesitated what to do, his attention was called to a loud noise at the door, where a crowd had been assembled in consequence of the appalling cry, that the enemy were upon them, occasioned, as it afterwards proved, by some stragglers having at length discovered the dead bodies of Nanty Ewart and of Nixon.

Amid the confusion occasioned by this alarming incident, the sentinel ceased to attend to his duty; and, accepting Alan Fairford's arm, Liliás found no opposition in penetrating even to the inner apartment, where the principal persons in the enterprise, whose conclave had been disturbed by this alarming incident, were now assembled in great confusion, and had been joined by the Chevalier himself.

"Only a mutiny among these smuggling scoundrels," said Redgauntlet.

"*Only* a mutiny, do you say?" said Sir Richard Glendale; "and the lugger, the last hope of escape for"—he looked towards Charles,—"stands out to sea under a press of sail!"

"Do not concern yourself about me," said the unfortunate Prince; "this is not the worst emergency in which it has been my lot to stand; and if it were, I fear it not. Shift for yourselves, my lords and gentlemen."

"No, never!" said the young Lord—. "Our only hope now is in an honourable resistance."

"Most true," said Redgauntlet; "let despair renew the union amongst us which accident disturbed. I give my voice for displaying the royal banner instantly, and—How now!" he concluded, sternly, as Liliás, first soliciting his attention by pulling his cloak, put into his hand the scroll, and added, it was designed for that of Nixon.

Redgauntlet read—and, dropping it on the ground, continued to stare upon the spot where it fell, with raised hands and fixed eyes. Sir Richard Glendale lifted the fatal paper, read it, and saying, "Now all is indeed over," handed it to Maxwell, who said aloud, "Black Colin Campbell, by G—d! I heard he had come post from London last night."

As if in echo to his thoughts, the violin of the blind man was heard, playing with spirit, "The Campbells are coming," a celebrated clan-march.

"The Campbells are coming in earnest," said MacKellar; "they are upon us with the whole battalion from Carlisle."

There was a silence of dismay, and two or three of the company began to drop out of the room.

Lord—spoke with the generous spirit of a young English nobleman. "If we have been fools, do not let us be cowards. We have one here more precious than us all, and come hither on our warranty—let us save him at least."

"True, most true," answered Sir Richard Glendale. "Let the King be first cared for."

"That shall be my business," said Redgauntlet; "if we have but time to bring back the brig, all will be well—I will instantly despatch

a party in a fishing skiff to bring her to."—He gave his commands to two or three of the most active among his followers.—"Let him be once on board," he said, "and there are enough of us to stand to arms and cover his retreat."

"Right, right," said Sir Richard, "and I will look to points which can be made defensible; and the old powder-plot boys could not have made a more desperate resistance than we shall.—Redgauntlet," continued he, "I see some of our friends are looking pale; but methinks your nephew has more mettle in his eye now than when we were in cold deliberation, with danger at a distance."

"It is the way of our house," said Redgauntlet; "our courage ever kindles highest on the losing side. I, too, feel that the catastrophe I have brought on must not be survived by its author. Let me first," he said, addressing Charles, "see your Majesty's sacred person in such safety as can now be provided for it, and then——"

"You may spare all considerations concerning me, gentlemen," again repeated Charles; "yon mountain of Criffel shall fly as soon as I will."

Most threw themselves at his feet with weeping and entreaty; some one or two slunk in confusion from the apartment, and were heard riding off. Unnoticed in such a scene, Darsie, his sister, and Fairford, drew together, and held each other by the hands, as those who, when a vessel is about to founder in the storm, determine to take their chance of life and death together.

Amid this scene of confusion, a gentleman, plainly dressed in a riding-habit, with a black cockade in his hat, but without any arms except a *couteau-de-chasse*, walked into the apartment without ceremony. He was a tall, thin, gentlemanly man, with a look and bearing decidedly military. He had passed through their guards, if in the confusion they now maintained any, without stop or question, and now stood, almost unarmed, among armed men, who, nevertheless, gazed on him as on the angel of destruction.

"You look coldly on me, gentlemen," he said. "Sir Richard Glendale—my Lord——, we were not always such strangers. Ha, Pate-in-Peril, how is it with you? and you, too, Ingoldsby—I must not call you by any other name—why do you receive an old friend so coldly? But you guess my errand."

"And are prepared for it, General," said Redgauntlet; "we are not men to be penned up like sheep for the slaughter."

"Pshaw! you take it too seriously—let me speak but one word with you."

"No words can shake our purpose," said Redgauntlet, "were your whole command, as I suppose is the case, drawn round the house."

"I am certainly not unsupported," said the General; "but if you would hear me——"

"Hear *me*, sir," said the Wanderer, stepping forward; "I suppose I am the mark you aim at—I surrender myself willingly, to save these gentlemen's danger—let this at least avail in their favour."

An exclamation of "Never, never!" broke from the little body of

partisans, who threw themselves round the unfortunate Prince, and would have seized or struck down Campbell, had it not been that he remained with his arms folded, and a look, rather indicating impatience because they would not hear him, than the least apprehension of violence at their hand.

At length he obtained a moment's silence. "I do not," he said, "know this gentleman"—(making a profound bow to the unfortunate Prince)—"I do not wish to know him; it is a knowledge which would suit neither of us."

"Our ancestors, nevertheless, have been well acquainted," said Charles, unable to suppress, even at that hour of dread and danger, the painful recollections of fallen royalty.

"In one word, General Campbell," said Redgauntlet, "is it to be peace or war?—You are a man of honour, and we can trust you."

"I thank you, sir," said the General; "and I reply, that the answer to your question rests with yourself. Come, do not be fools, gentlemen; there was perhaps no great harm meant or intended by your gathering together in this obscure corner, for a bear-bait or a cock-fight, or whatever other amusement you may have intended, but it was a little imprudent, considering how you stand with government, and it has occasioned some anxiety. Exaggerated accounts of your purpose have been laid before government by the information of a traitor in your own councils; and I was sent down post to take the command of a sufficient number of troops, in case these calumnies should be found to have any real foundation. I have come here, of course, sufficiently supported both with cavalry and infantry, to do whatever might be necessary; but my commands are—and I am sure they agree with my inclination—to make no arrests, nay, to make no farther inquiries of any kind, if this good assembly will consider their own interest so far as to give up their immediate purpose, and return quietly home to their own houses."

"What!—all?" exclaimed Sir Richard Glendale—"all, without exception?"

"ALL, without one single exception," said the General; "such are my orders. If you accept my terms, say so, and make haste; for things may happen to interfere with his Majesty's kind purposes towards you all."

"His Majesty's kind purposes!" said the Wanderer. "Do I hear you aright, sir?"

"I speak the King's very words, from his very lips," replied the General. "'I will,' said his Majesty, 'deserve the confidence of my subjects by reposing my security in the fidelity of the millions who acknowledge my title—in the good sense and prudence of the few who continue, from the errors of education, to disown it.'—His Majesty will not even believe that the most zealous Jacobites who yet remain can nourish a thought of exciting a civil war, which must be fatal to their families and themselves, besides spreading bloodshed and ruin through a peaceful land. He cannot even believe of his kinsman, that he would engage brave and generous, though mistaken men, in an attempt which must ruin all who have escaped former calamities; and he is convinced that, did curiosity

or any other motive lead that person to visit this country, he would soon see it was his wisest course to return to the Continent; and his Majesty compassionates his situation too much to offer any obstacle to his doing so."

"Is this real?" said Redgauntlet. "Can you mean this?—Am I—are all, are any of these gentlemen at liberty, without interruption, to embark in yonder brig, which, I see, is now again approaching the shore?"

"You, sir—all—any of the gentlemen present," said the General,—"all whom the vessel can contain, are at liberty to embark uninterrupted by me; but I advise none to go off who have not powerful reasons, unconnected with the present meeting, for this will be remembered against no one."

"Then, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet, clasping his hands together as the words burst from him, "the cause is lost for ever!"

General Campbell turned away to the window, as if to avoid hearing what they said. Their consultation was but momentary; for the door of escape which thus opened was as unexpected as the exigence was threatening.

"We have your word of honour for our protection," said Sir Richard Glendale, "if we dissolve our meeting in obedience to your summons?"

"You have, Sir Richard," answered the General.

"And I also have your promise," said Redgauntlet, "that I may go on board yonder vessel, with any friend whom I may choose to accompany me?"

"Not only that, Mr Ingoldsby—or I *will* call you Mr Redgauntlet once more—you may stay in the offing for a tide, until you are joined by any person who may remain at Fairladies. After that, there will be a sloop of war on the station, and I need not say your condition will then become perilous."

"Perilous it should not be, General Campbell," said Redgauntlet, "or more perilous to others than to us, if others thought as I do even in this extremity."

"You forget yourself, my friend," said the unhappy Adventurer; "you forget that the arrival of this gentleman only puts the copestone on our already adopted resolution to abandon our bull-fight, or by whatever other wild name this headlong enterprise may be termed. I bid you farewell, unfriendly friends—I bid *you* farewell" (bowing to the General), "my friendly foe—I leave this strand as I landed upon it, alone and to return no more!"

"Not alone," said Redgauntlet, "while there is blood in the veins of my father's son."

"Not alone," said the other gentlemen present, stung with feelings which almost overpowered the better reasons under which they had acted. "We will not disown our principles, or see your person endangered."

"If it be only your purpose to see the gentleman to the beach," said General Campbell, "I will myself go with you. My presence among you, unarmed, and in your power, will be a pledge of my

friendly intentions, and will overawe, should such be offered, any interruption on the part of officious persons."

"Be it so," said the Adventurer, with the air of a Prince to a subject; not of one who complied with the request of an enemy too powerful to be resisted.

They left the apartment—they left the house—an unauthenticated and dubious, but appalling, sensation of terror had already spread itself among the inferior retainers, who had so short time before strutted, and bustled, and thronged the doorway and the passages. A report had arisen, of which the origin could not be traced, of troops advancing towards the spot in considerable numbers; and men who, for one reason or other, were most of them amenable to the arm of power, had either shrunk into stables or corners, or fled the place entirely. There was solitude on the landscape, excepting the small party which now moved towards the rude pier, where a boat lay manned, agreeably to Redgauntlet's orders previously given.

The last heir of the Stewarts leant on Redgauntlet's arm as they walked towards the beach; for the ground was rough, and he no longer possessed the elasticity of limb and of spirit which had, twenty years before, carried him over many a Highland hill as light as one of their native deer. His adherents followed, looking on the ground, their feelings struggling against the dictates of their reason.

General Campbell accompanied them with an air of apparent ease and indifference, but watching, at the same time, and no doubt with some anxiety, the changing features of those who acted in this extraordinary scene.

Darsie and his sister naturally followed their uncle, whose violence they no longer feared, while his character attracted their respect; and Alan Fairford attended them from interest in their fate, unnoticed in a party where all were too much occupied with their own thoughts and feelings, as well as with the impending crisis, to attend to his presence.

Half-way betwixt the house and the beach, they saw the bodies of Nanty Ewart and Cristal Nixon blackening in the sun.

"That was your informer?" said Redgauntlet, looking back to General Campbell, who only nodded his assent.

"Caitiff wretch!" exclaimed Redgauntlet;—"and yet the name were better bestowed on the fool who could be misled by thee."

"That sound broadsword-cut," said the General, "has saved us the shame of rewarding a traitor."

They arrived at the place of embarkation. The Prince stood a moment with folded arms, and looked around him in deep silence. A paper was then slipped into his hands—he looked at it, and said, "I find the two friends I have left at Fairladies are apprised of my destination, and propose to embark from Bowness. I presume this will not be an infringement of the conditions under which you have acted?"

"Certainly not," answered General Campbell; "they shall have all facility to join you."

"I wish, then," said Charles, "only another companion. Redgauntlet, the air of this country is as hostile to you as it is to me. These gentlemen have made their peace, or rather they have done nothing to break it. But you—come you, and share my home where chance shall cast it. We shall never see these shores again; but we will talk of them, and of our disconcerted bull-fight."

"I follow you, Sire, through life," said Redgauntlet, "as I would have followed you to death. Permit me one moment."

The Prince then looked round, and seeing the abashed countenances of his other adherents bent upon the ground, he hastened to say, "Do not think that you, gentlemen, have obliged me less because your zeal was mingled with prudence, entertained, I am sure, more on my own account, and on that of your country, than from selfish apprehensions."

He stepped from one to another, and, amid sobs and bursting tears, received the adieus of the last remnant which had hitherto supported his lofty pretensions, and addressed them individually with accents of tenderness and affection.

The General drew a little aloof, and signed to Redgauntlet to speak with him while this scene proceeded. "It is now all over," he said, "and Jacobite will be henceforward no longer a party name. When you tire of foreign parts, and wish to make your peace, let me know. Your restless zeal alone has impeded your pardon hitherto."

"And now I shall not need it," said Redgauntlet. "I leave England for ever; but I am not displeased that you should hear my family adieus. Nephew, come hither. In presence of General Campbell, I tell you, that though to breed you up in my own political opinions has been for many years my anxious wish, I am now glad that it could not be accomplished. You pass under the service of the reigning Monarch without the necessity of changing your allegiance—a change, however," he added, looking around him, "which sits more easy on honourable men than I could have anticipated; but some wear the badge of their loyalty on the sleeve, and others in the heart. You will, from henceforward, be uncontrolled master of all the property of which forfeiture could not deprive your father—of all that belonged to him—excepting this, his good sword" (laying his hand on the weapon he wore), "which shall never fight for the House of Hanover; and as my hand will never draw weapon more, I shall sink it forty fathoms deep in the wide ocean. Bless you, young man! If I have dealt harshly with you, forgive me. I had set my whole desires on one point,—God knows, with no selfish purpose; and I am justly punished by this final termination of my views, for having been too little scrupulous in the means by which I pursued them. Niece, farewell, and may God bless you also!"

"No, sir," said Lilius, seizing his hand eagerly. "You have been hitherto my protector,—you are now in sorrow, let me be your attendant and your comforter in exile."

"I thank you, my girl, for your unmerited affection; but it cannot and must not be. The curtain here falls between us. I go to the house of another—If I leave it before I quit the earth, it shall be

only for the House of God. Once more, farewell both! The fatal doom," he said, with a melancholy smile, "will, I trust, now depart from the House of Redgauntlet, since its present representative has adhered to the winning side. I am convinced he will not change it, should it in turn become the losing one."

The unfortunate Charles Edward had now given his last adieus to his downcast adherents. He made a sign with his hand to Redgauntlet, who came to assist him into the skiff. General Campbell also offered his assistance, the rest appearing too much affected by the scene which had taken place to prevent him.

"You are not sorry, General, to do me this last act of courtesy," said the Chevalier; "and, on my part, I thank you for it. You have taught me the principle on which men on the scaffold feel forgiveness and kindness even for their executioner.—Farewell!"

They were seated in the boat, which presently pulled off from the land. The Oxford divine broke out into a loud benediction, in terms which General Campbell was too generous to criticise at the time, or to remember afterwards; nay, it is said, that, Whig and Campbell as he was, he could not help joining in the universal Amen! which resounded from the shore.

CONCLUSION,

BY DR DRYASDUST,

IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

I AM truly sorry, my worthy and much-respected sir, that my anxious researches have neither, in the form of letters, nor of diaries, nor other memoranda, been able to discover more than I have hitherto transmitted, of the history of the Redgauntlet family. But I observe in an old newspaper called the Whitehall Gazette, of which I fortunately possess a file for several years, that Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet was presented to his late Majesty at the drawing-room, by Lieut.-General Campbell—upon which the Editor observes, in the way of comment, that we were going, *remis atque velis*, into the interests of the Pretender, since a Scot had presented a Jacobite at Court. I am sorry I have not room (the frank being only uncial) for his farther observations, tending to show the apprehensions, entertained by many well-instructed persons of the period, that the young King might himself be induced to become one of the Stewarts' faction,—a catastrophe from which it has pleased Heaven to preserve these kingdoms.

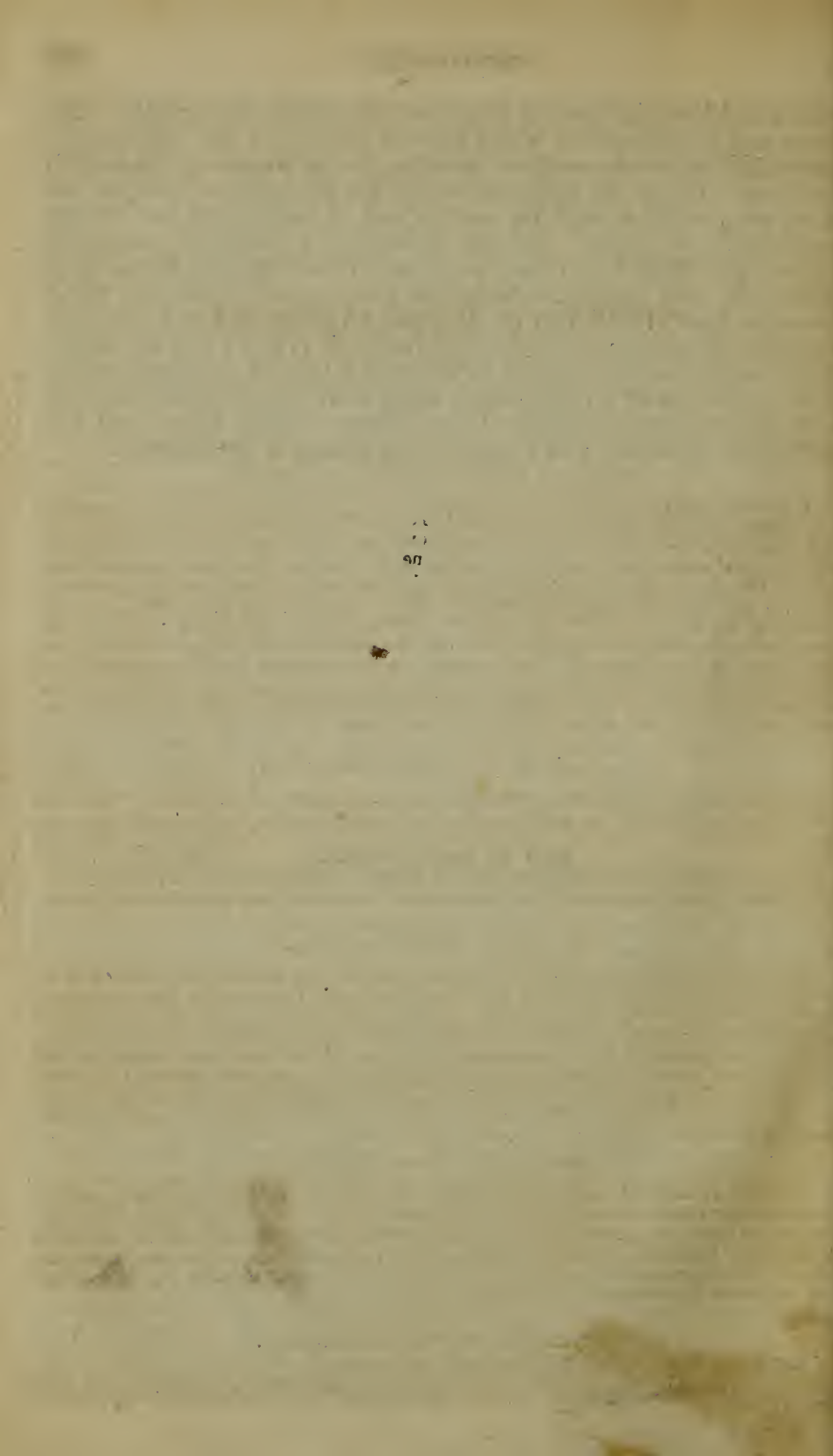
I perceive also, by a marriage contract in the family repositories, that Miss Liliast Redgauntlet of Redgauntlet, about eighteen months after the transactions you have commemorated, intermarried with

Alan Fairford, Esq. Advocate, of Clinkdollar, who, I think, we may not unreasonably conclude to be the same person whose name occurs so frequently in the pages of your narration. In my last excursion to Edinburgh, I was fortunate enough to discover an old cadie, from whom, at the expense of a bottle of whisky and half a pound of tobacco, I extracted the important information, that he knew Peter Peebles very well, and had drunk many a mutchkin with him in Cadie Fraser's time. He said that he lived ten years after King George's accession, in the momentary expectation of winning his cause every day in the Session time, and every hour in the day, and at last fell down dead, in what my informer called a "Perplexity fit," upon a proposal for a composition being made to him in the Outer-House. I have chosen to retain my informer's phrase, not being able justly to determine whether it is a corruption of the word apoplexy, as my friend Mr Oldbuck supposes, or the name of some peculiar disorder incidental to those who have concern in the Courts of Law, as many callings and conditions of men have diseases appropriate to themselves. The same cadie also remembered Blind Willie Stevenson, who was called Wandering Willie, and who ended his days "unco beinly, in Sir Arthur Redgauntlet's ha' neuk." "He had done the family some good turn," he said, "specially when ane of the Argyle gentlemen was coming down on a wheen of them that had the 'auld leaven' about them, and wad hae taen every man of them, and nae less nor headed and hanged them. But Willie, and a friend they had, called Robin the Rambler, gae them warning, by playing tunes, such as 'the Campbells are coming,' and the like, whereby they got timeous warning to take the wing." I need not point out to your acuteness, my worthy sir, that this seems to refer to some inaccurate account of the transactions in which you seem so much interested.

Respecting Redgauntlet, about whose subsequent history you are more particularly inquisitive, I have learned from an excellent person who was a priest in the Scottish Monastery of Ratisbon, before its suppression, that he remained for two or three years in the family of the Chevalier, and only left it at last in consequence of some discords in that melancholy household. As he had hinted to General Campbell, he exchanged his residence for the cloister, and displayed in the latter part of his life a strong sense of the duties of religion, which in his earlier days he had too much neglected, being altogether engaged in political speculations and intrigues. He rose to the situation of Prior, in the house which he belonged to, and which was of a very strict order of religion. He sometimes received his countrymen, whom accident brought to Ratisbon, and curiosity induced to visit the Monastery of —. But it was remarked, that though he listened with interest and attention, when Britain, or particularly Scotland, became the subject of conversation, yet he never either introduced or prolonged the subject, never used the English language, never inquired about English affairs, and, above all, never mentioned his own family. His strict observation of the rules of his order gave him, at the time of his death, some pretensions to be chosen a saint, and the brethren of the Monastery of — made great efforts for that

effect, and brought forward some plausible proofs of miracles. But there was a circumstance which threw a doubt over the subject, and prevented the consistory from acceding to the wishes of the worthy brethren. Under his habit, and secured in a small silver box, he had worn perpetually around his neck a lock of hair, which the fathers avouched to be a relic. But the Avocato del Diabolo, in combating (as was his official duty) the pretensions of the candidate for sanctity, made it at least equally probable that the supposed relict was taken from the head of a brother of the deceased Prior, who had been executed for adherence to the Stewart family in 1745-6; and the motto, *Haud obliviscendum*, seemed to intimate a tone of mundane feeling and recollection of injuries, which made it at least doubtful whether, even in the quiet and gloom of the cloister, Father Hugo had forgotten the sufferings and injuries of the House of Redgauntlet.

END OF REDGAUNTLET.



NOTES TO REDGAUNTLET.

Note A, p. 12. THE KITTLE NINE-STEPS.

A PASS on the very brink of the Castle-rock to the north, by which it is just possible for a goat, or a high-school boy, to turn the corner of the building where it rises from the edge of the precipice. This was so favourite a feat with the "hell-and-neck boys" of the higher classes, that at one time sentinels were posted to prevent its repetition. One of the nine-steps was rendered more secure because the climber could take hold of the root of a nettle, so precarious were the means of passing this celebrated spot. The manning the Cowgate Port, especially in snow-ball time, was also a choice amusement, as it offered an inaccessible station for the boys who used these missiles to the annoyance of the passengers. The gateway is now demolished; and probably most of its garrison lie as low as the fortress. To recollect that the author himself, however naturally disqualified, was one of those juvenile dreadnoughts, is a sad reflection to one who cannot now step over a brook without assistance.

Note B, p. 13. PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

The Hall of the Parliament House of Edinburgh was, in former days, divided into two unequal portions by a partition, the inner side of which was consecrated to the use of the Courts of Justice and the gentlemen of the law; while the outer division was occupied by the stalls of stationers, toymen, and the like, as in a modern bazaar. From the old play of the Plain Dealer, it seems such was formerly the case with Westminster Hall. Minos has now purified his courts in both cities from all traffic but his own.

Note C, p. 13. THE CRAMP SPEECH.

Till of late years, every advocate who entered at the Scottish bar made a Latin address to the Court, faculty, and audience, in set terms, and said a few words upon a text of the civil law, to show his Latinity and jurisprudence. He also wore his hat for a minute, in order to vindicate his right of being covered before the Court, which is said to have originated from the celebrated lawyer, Sir Thomas Hope, having two sons on the bench while he himself remained at the bar. Of late this ceremony has been dispensed with, as occupying the time of the Court unnecessarily. The entrant lawyer merely takes the oaths to government, and swears to maintain the rules and privileges of his order.

Note D, p. 16. LETTER FRANKS.

It is well known and remembered, that when Members of Parliament enjoyed the unlimited privilege of franking by the mere writing the name on the cover, it was extended to the most extraordinary occasions. One noble lord, to express his regard for a particular regiment, franked a letter for every rank and file. It was customary also to save the covers and return them, in order that the correspondence might be carried on as long as the envelopes could hold together.

Note E, p. 20. BROWN'S SQUARE.

The diminutive and obscure *place* called Brown's Square, was hailed about the time of its erection as an extremely elegant improvement upon the style of designing and

erecting Edinburgh residences. Each house was, in the phrase used by appraisers, "finished within itself," or, in the still newer phraseology, "self-contained." It was built about the year 1763-4; and the old part of the city being near and accessible, this square soon received many inhabitants, who ventured to remove to so moderate a distance from the High Street.

Note F, p. 65. RESIDENCE WITH THE QUAKER.

In explanation of this circumstance, I cannot help adding a note not very necessary for the reader, which yet I record with pleasure, from recollection of the kindness which it evinces. In early youth I resided for a considerable time in the vicinity of the beautiful village of Kelso, where my life passed in a very solitary manner. I had few acquaintances, scarce any companions, and books, which were at the time almost essential to my happiness, were difficult to come by. It was then that I was particularly indebted to the liberality and friendship of an old lady of the Society of Friends, eminent for her benevolence and charity. Her deceased husband had been a medical man of eminence, and left her, with other valuable property, a small and well-selected library. This the kind old lady permitted me to rummage at pleasure, and carry home what volumes I chose, on condition that I should take, at the same time, some of the tracts printed for encouraging and extending the doctrines of her own sect. She did not even exact any promise that I would read these performances, being too justly afraid of involving me in a breach of promise, but was merely desirous that I should have the chance of instruction within my reach, in case whim, curiosity, or accident, might induce me to have recourse to it.

Note G, p. 77. "FOR ALL OUR MEN WERE," &c.

The original of this catch is to be found in Cowley's witty comedy of the Guardian, the first edition. It does not exist in the second and revised edition, called the Cutter of Coleman Street.

"CAPTAIN BLADE. Ha, ha, boys, another catch.

*And all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking.*

CUTTER. *One man of mine.*

DOGREL. *Two men of mine.*

BLADE. *Three men of mine.*

CUTTER. *And one man of mine.*

OMNES. *As we went by the way we were drunk, drunk, damnably drunk,
And all our men were very very merry," &c.*

Such are the words, which are somewhat altered and amplified in the text. The play was acted in presence of Charles II., then Prince of Wales, in 1641. The catch in the text has been happily set to music.

Note H, p. 86. THE CAMERONIANS.

The caution and moderation of King William III., and his principles of unlimited toleration, deprived the Cameronians of the opportunity they ardently desired, to retaliate the injuries which they had received during the reign of prelacy, and purify the land, as they called it, from the pollution of blood. They esteemed the Revolution therefore, only a half measure, which neither comprehended the rebuilding the Kirk in its full splendour, nor the revenge of the death of the Saints on their persecutors.

Note I, p. 94. THE PERSECUTORS.

The personages here mentioned are most of them characters of historical fame; but those less known and remembered may be found in the tract entitled, "The Judgment and Justice of God Exemplified; or, a Brief Historical Account of some of the Wicked Lives and Miserable Deaths of some of the most remarkable Apostates and Bloody Persecutors, from the Reformation till after the Revolution." This constitutes a sort of postscript or appendix to John Howie of Lochgoin's "Account of the Lives of the most eminent Scots Worthies." The author has, with considerable ingenuity, reversed his reasoning upon the inference to be drawn from the prosperity or misfortunes which befall individuals in this world, either in the course of their lives or in the hour of death. In the account of the martyrs' sufferings, such inflictions are mentioned only as trials permitted by Providence, for the better and brighter display of their faith, and constancy of principle. But when similar afflictions befell the opposite party,

they are imputed to the direct vengeance of Heaven upon their impiety. If, indeed, the life of any person obnoxious to the historian's censures happened to have passed in unusual prosperity, the mere fact of its being finally concluded by death is assumed as an undeniable token of the judgment of Heaven, and, to render the conclusion inevitable, his last scene is generally garnished with some singular circumstances. Thus the Duke of Lauderdale is said, through old age but immense corpulence, to have become so sunk in spirits, "that his heart was not the bigness of a walnut."

Note K, p. 98. END OF "WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE."

I have heard in my youth some such wild tale as that placed in the mouth of the blind fiddler, of which, I think, the hero was Sir Robert Grierson of Lagg, the famous persecutor. But the belief was general throughout Scotland, that the excessive lamentation over the loss of friends disturbed the repose of the dead, and broke even the rest of the grave. There are several instances of this in tradition, but one struck me particularly, as I heard it from the lips of one who professed receiving it from those of a ghost-seer. This was a Highland lady, named Mrs C—— of B——, who probably believed firmly in the truth of an apparition, which seems to have originated in the weakness of her nerves and strength of her imagination. She had been lately left a widow by her husband, with the office of guardian to their only child. The young man added to the difficulties of his charge by an extreme propensity for a military life, which his mother was unwilling to give way to, while she found it impossible to repress it. About this time the Independent Companies, formed for the preservation of the peace of the Highlands, were in the course of being levied; and as a gentleman named Cameron, nearly connected with Mrs C——, commanded one of those companies, she was at length persuaded to compromise the matter with her son, by permitting him to enter this company in the capacity of a cadet, thus gratifying his love of a military life without the dangers of foreign service, to which no one then thought these troops were at all liable to be exposed, while even their active service at home was not likely to be attended with much danger. She readily obtained a promise from her relative that he would be particular in his attention to her son, and therefore concluded she had accommodated matters between her son's wishes and his safety in a way sufficiently attentive to both. She set off to Edinburgh to get what was wanting for his outfit, and shortly afterwards received melancholy news from the Highlands. The Independent Company, into which her son was to enter, had a skirmish with a party of caterans engaged in some act of spoil, and her friend the captain being wounded, and out of the reach of medical assistance, died in consequence. This news was a thunderbolt to the poor mother, who was at once deprived of her kinsman's advice and assistance, and instructed by his fate of the unexpected danger to which her son's new calling exposed him. She remained also in great sorrow for her relative, whom she loved with sisterly affection. These conflicting causes of anxiety, together with her uncertainty whether to continue or change her son's destination, were terminated in the following manner:—

The house in which Mrs C—— resided in the old town of Edinburgh, was a flat or story of a land accessible, as was then universal, by a common stair. The family who occupied the story beneath were her acquaintances, and she was in the habit of drinking tea with them every evening. It was accordingly about six o'clock, when, recovering herself from a deep fit of anxious reflection, she was about to leave the parlour in which she sat in order to attend this engagement. The door through which she was to pass opened, as was very common in Edinburgh, into a dark passage. In this passage, and within a yard of her when she opened the door, stood the apparition of her kinsman, the deceased officer, in his full tartans, and wearing his bonnet. Terrified at what she saw, or thought she saw, she closed the door hastily, and, sinking on her knees by a chair, prayed to be delivered from the horrors of the vision. She remained in that posture till her friends below tapped on the floor to intimate that tea was ready. Recalled to herself by the signal, she arose, and, on opening the apartment door, again was confronted by the visionary Highlander, whose bloody brow bore token, on this second appearance, to the death he had died. Unable to endure this repetition of her terrors, Mrs C—— sunk on the floor in a swoon. Her friends below, startled with the noise, came up-stairs, and, alarmed at the situation in which they found her, insisted on her going to bed and taking some medicine, in order to compose her mind. They took for a nervous attack. They had no sooner left her in quiet, than the apparition of the soldier was once more visible in the apartment. This time she took the name of God, Donald, why do you haunt one who respected you when living? To which he answered readily, in Gaelic, "Cousin, why did you not speak sooner? My rest is disturbed by your unnecessary lamenta-

tion—your tears scald me in my shroud. I come to tell you that my untimely death ought to make no difference in your views for your son; God will raise patrons to supply my place, and he will live to the fulness of years, and die honoured and at peace." The lady of course followed her kinsman's advice; and as she was accounted a person of strict veracity, we may conclude the first apparition an illusion on the fancy, the final one a lively dream suggested by the other two.

Note L, p. 111. PETER PEEBLES.

This unfortunate litigant (for a person named Peter Peebles actually flourished frequented the courts of justice in Scotland about the year 1792, and the sketch of his appearance is given from recollection. The author is of opinion, that he himself had at one time the honour to be counsel for Peter Peebles, whose voluminous course of litigation served as a sort of assay-pieces to most young men who were called to the bar. The scene of the consultation is entirely imaginary.

Note M, p. 119. THE REBELLION AS THE AFFAIR OF 1745.

OLD-FASHIONED SCOTTISH CIVILITY.—Such were literally the points of politeness observed in general society during the author's youth, where it was by no means unusual, in a company assembled by chance, to find individuals who had borne arms on one side or other in the civil broils of 1745. Nothing, according to my recollection, could be more gentle and decorous than the respect these old enemies paid to each other's prejudices. But in this I speak generally. I have witnessed one or two explosions.

Note N, p. 123. JOHN'S COFFEE-HOUSE.

This small dark coffee-house, now burnt down, was the resort of such writers and clerks belonging to the Parliament House above thirty years ago, as retained the ancient Scottish custom of a meridian, as it was called, or noontide dram of spirits. If their proceedings were watched, they might be seen to turn fidgety about the hour of noon, and exchange looks with each other from their separate desks, till at length some one of formal and dignified presence assumed the honour of leading the band, when away they went, threading the crowd like a string of wild-fowl, crossed the square or close, and following each other into the coffee-house, received in turn from the hand of the waiter the meridian, which was placed ready at the bar. This they did, day by day; and though they did not speak to each other, they seemed to attach a certain degree of sociability to performing the ceremony in company.

Note O, p. 133. SCOTTISH JUDGES.

The Scottish Judges are distinguished by the title of lord prefixed to their own temporal designation. As the ladies of these official dignitaries do not bear any share in their husband's honours, they are distinguished only by their lords' family name. They were not always contented with this species of Salique law, which certainly is somewhat inconsistent. But their pretensions to title are said to have been long since repelled by James V., the Sovereign who founded the College of Justice. "I," said he, "made the carls lords, but who the devil made the earlines ladies?"

Note P, p. 149. RIOTOUS ATTACK UPON THE DAM-DIKE OF SIR JAMES GRAHAM OF NETHERBY.

It may be here mentioned, that a violent and popular attack upon what the country people of this district considered as an invasion of their fishing right, is by no means an improbable fiction. Shortly after the close of the American war, Sir James Graham of Netherby constructed a dam-dike, or cauld, across the Esk, at a place where it flowed through his estate, though it has its origin, and the principal part of its course, in Scotland. The new barrier at Netherby was considered as an encroachment calculated to prevent the salmon from ascending into Scotland; and the right of erecting it being an international question of law betwixt the sister kingdoms, there was no court in either competent to its decision. In this dilemma, the Scots people assembled in numbers by signal of rocket-lights, and, rudely armed with fowling-pieces, fish-spears, and such rustic weapons, marched to the banks of the river for the purpose of pulling down the dam-dike objected to. Sir James Graham armed many of his own people to protect his property, and had some military from Carlisle for the same purpose. As the Border wars had nearly taken place in the eighteenth century, when prudence and moderation on both sides saved much tumult, and perhaps some bloodshed. The

English proprietor consented that a breach should be made in his dam-dike sufficient for the passage of the fish, and thus removed the Scottish grievance. I believe the river has since that time taken the matter into its own disposal, and entirely swept away the dam-dike in question.

Note Q, p. 195. TREPANNED AND CONCEALED.

Scotland, in its half-civilised state, exhibited too many examples of the exertion of arbitrary force and violence, rendered easy by the dominion which lairds exerted over their tenants, and chiefs over their clans. The captivity of Lady Grange, in the desolate cliffs Saint Kilda, is in the recollection of every one. At the supposed date of the novel also, a man of the name of Merrilees, a tanner in Leith, absconded from his country to escape his creditors; and after having slain his own mastiff dog, and put a bit of red cloth in its mouth, as if it had died in a contest with soldiers, and involved his own existence in as much mystery as possible, made his escape into Yorkshire. Here he was detected by persons sent in search of him, to whom he gave a portentous account of his having been carried off and concealed in various places. Mr Merrilees was, in short, a kind of male Elizabeth Canning, but did not trespass on the public credulity quite so long.

Note R, p. 202. ESCAPE OF PATE-IN-PERIL.

The escape of a Jacobite gentleman while on the road to Carlisle to take his trial for his share in the affair of 1745, took place at Errickstane-brae, in the singular manner described to the Laird of Summertrees in the text. The author has seen in his youth the gentleman to whom the adventure actually happened. The distance of time makes some indistinctness of recollection, but it is believed the real name was MacEwen or MacMillan.

Note S, p. 202. ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY.

An old gentleman of the author's name was engaged in the affair of 1715, and with some difficulty was saved from the gallows, by the intercession of the Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. Her Grace, who maintained a good deal of authority over her man, sent for the object of her intercession, and warning him of the risk which he had run, and the trouble she had taken on his account, wound up her lecture by intimating, that in case of such disloyalty again, he was not to expect her interest in his favour. "An it please your Grace," said the stout old Tory, "I fear I am too old to see another opportunity."

Note T, p. 227. CONCEALMENTS FOR THEFT AND SMUGGLING.

I am sorry to say that the modes of concealment described in the imaginary premises of Mr Trumbull are of a kind which have been common on the frontiers, of late years. The neighbourhood of two nations having different laws, though united in government, still leads to a multitude of transgressions on the Border, and extreme difficulty in apprehending delinquents. About twenty years since, as far as my recollection serves, there was along the frontier an organised gang of coiners, forgers, smugglers, and other malefactors, whose operations were conducted on a scale not inferior to what is here described. The chief of the party was one Richard Mendham, a carpenter, who rose to opulence, although ignorant even of the arts of reading and writing. But he had found a short road to wealth, and had taken singular measures for conducting his operations. Amongst these, he found means to build, in a suburb of Berwick called Spittal, a street of small houses, as if for the investment of property. He himself inhabited one of these; another, a species of public-house, was open to his confederates, who held secret and unsuspected communication with him by crossing the roofs of the intervening houses, and descending by a trap-stair, which admitted them into the alcove of the dining-room of Dick Mendham's private mansion. A vault, too, beneath Mendham's stable, was accessible in the manner mentioned in the novel. The post of one of the stalls turned round on a bolt being withdrawn, and gave admittance to a subterranean place of concealment for contraband and stolen goods, to a great extent. Richard Mendham, the head of this very formidable conspiracy, which involved malefactors of every kind, was tried and executed at Jedburgh, where the author was present as Sheriff of Selkirkshire. Mendham had previously been tried, but escaped by want of proof and ingenuity of his counsel.

Note U, p. 268. MARKS UPON UNBORN BABES.

Several persons have brought down to these days the impressions which Nature had thus re-acted, when they were yet unborn. One lady of quality, whose father

was long under sentence of death, previous to the Rebellion, was marked on the back of the neck by the sign of a broad axe. Another, whose kinsmen had been slain in battle, and died on the scaffold, to the number of seven, bore a child spattered on his right shoulder, and down the arm, with scarlet drops, as if of blood. Many other instances might be quoted.

Note X, p. 275. CORONATION OF GEORGE III.

In excuse of what may be considered as a violent infraction of probability in the foregoing chapter, the author is under the necessity of quoting a tradition which many persons may recollect having heard. It was always said, though with very little appearance of truth, that upon the Coronation of the late George III., when the Champion of England, Dymock, or his representative, appeared in Westminster Hall, and in the language of chivalry, solemnly wagered his body to defend in single combat the right of the young King to the crown of these realms, at the moment when he flung down the pledge, leaving another gage in room of it, with a paper expressing, that if a fair field of combat should be allowed, a champion of rank and birth would appear with equal arms to dispute the claim of King George to the British kingdoms. The story is probably one of the numerous fictions which were circulated to keep up the spirits of a sinking faction. The incident was, however, possible, if it could be supposed to be attended by any motive adequate to the risk, and might be imagined to occur to a person of Redgauntlet's enthusiastic character. George III., it is said, had a police of his own whose agency was so efficient, that the Sovereign was able to tell his prime minister upon one occasion, to his great surprise, that the Pretender was in London. The prime minister began immediately to talk of measures to be taken, warrants to be procured, messengers and guards to be got in readiness, "Pooh, pooh," said the good-natured Sovereign, "since I have found him out, leave me alone to deal with him."—"And what," said the minister, "is your Majesty's purpose in so important a case?"—"To leave the young man to himself," said George III., "and when he tires he will go back again." The truth of this story does not depend on that of the lifting of the gauntlet, and while the latter could be but an idle bravade, the former expresses George III.'s goodness of heart and soundness of policy.

Note Y, p. 302. COLLIER AND SALTER.

The persons engaged in these occupations were at this time bondsmen; and in case they left the ground of the farm to which they belonged, and as pertaining to which their services were bought or sold, they were liable to be brought back by a summary process. The existence of this species of slavery being thought irreconcilable with the spirit of liberty, colliers and salters were declared free, and put upon the same footing with other servants, by the Act 15, Geo. III. chapter 28th. They were so far from desiring or prizing the blessing conferred on them, that they esteemed the interest taken in their freedom to be a mere decree on the part of the proprietors to get rid of what they called head-and-harigald money, payable to them when a female of their number, by bearing a child, made an addition to the live stock of their master's property.

END OF THE NOTES TO REDGAUNTLET.

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WELL

SIR WALTER
SCOTT

Date Due

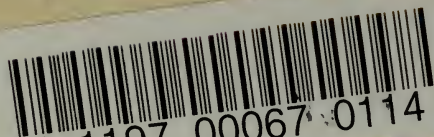
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